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Abstract

Detroit identifies that the structure created by people is pervious to destruction through time and nature. How then can the current built environment be rethought in preparation for Mother Nature's demise?

The present issue is that the built structure ultimately depreciates over time through lack of maintenance. A world that is created by people is in constant battle with the world that seeks to destroy it. Detroit is an example of how people play the essential role in society and its structure. At the time when Detroit battled political and social animosity, many moved out of the city confines. As a result the population dropped dramatically over the next couple decades.

Concurrently, as the community which built the neighborhoods almost became nonexistent, the infrastructure fell immediately to disrepair. With nature having the ultimate upper hand, the built environment has only one last human interaction; the wrecking ball. The land where structure and its people once flourished as a vibrant community, returns to the natural state as it was before people, as if it never had existed.

Structure is the result of society and its people. If people achieve to have ultimate control over structure within a society, can the structure be rethought to live, flourish, and appreciate through time even after people are gone, knowing that it will not last forever? Can a building seek to go beyond becoming "green" and be self sufficient to the point where human interaction is irrelevant?

What if society depended on nature

rather than its people? What if people used nature once again to survive? If ultimate control by people is not achieved, can a society change the standards of living and return to a more primitive form of life? Or can the realm of the built world that we know, coexist and ADAPT to realize our structural ruins as opportunities rather than misfortunes? The answer goes deeper than time itself. The human race evolved through nature, what happens now when people act as if they can take control nature itself.

An underlying interest has been rising in the last few years in parts of the world where people have left, especially in Detroit. People mainly young artists and entrepreneurs have been reclaiming abandoned parts of these cities. Cities are always reinventing themselves. Ancient worlds such as the Roman and Mayan societies have fallen, some have revived to create new, vibrant communities; while some have fallen untouched, forgotten.

My intention is to rethink our existing cities, to move a step forward and adapt with nature knowing buildings and their societies won't last forever. The permanence of a city remains a piece in time, almost as a photograph. Detroit's urban plan has changed drastically over time; intentionally as well as unintentionally. Many ideas of a successful city are to return to the nostalgic days of the early 20th century. However my goal is to see the city at the forefront of a transition, to remember the past, to embrace the natural, and to utilize both by adapting and creating a new, resilient Detroit.

Introduction

There has been a drastic change in the urban landscape for most rust belt cities that dot much of the Midwest. These cities have and still are experiencing major fluctuations in population from their inner cores to their Metropolitan. In some cases up to almost 50 percent of the population have left behind their homes and memories. This shift can be related to many different factors such as the political, economical, and social barriers which urban environments experience. The visible result of this decline has been most apparent in the abandoned housing stock within the inner city limits. So what becomes of all this unused and wasted space?

The intention of this thesis project is to identify and highlight those abandoned spaces. The goal is to repurpose, reprogram, and connect these blighted areas. It will be a cultural change in recognizing the opportunity in vacant buildings, rather than a misfortune. The goal is to take a landscape urbanism approach by respecting the past layers of the city and move forward through those traces to create new, viable environments. The intention of the project is to choose specific neglected and dangerous houses and rethink their use; this will lead to a process that tests the ideas conceptualized in the thesis and can be proven through their results. The most appropriate city to test a thesis of this magnitude would be Detroit, Michigan.

Detroit is an alluring monument of post industrial decay. The glamorous city transformed into a residual testament of apocalypse. It has transformed from a city of over 1.8 million

to 951,270 people from the years 1950 through 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau). Detroit's wealth and glamour were dependent on industrialization and modernity.

The mass production of automobiles, in time, would become a major factor in the demise of power and capitalism that Detroit once represented. The irony is that there is a certain dichotomy embedded into the roots of Detroit, where the machine that created the city, dismantled the city piece by piece. Now, the challenge is to envision these dismantled spaces as an asset to Detroit, rather than a further liability to its neighborhoods and communities.

The city had land for growth. Workers on the assembly lines had the resources to start their own dream; a dream of their own house, backyard, garage, and most of all, their own automobile. This was what was so unique about Detroit. All other cities of the time stayed clustered into boroughs, while Detroiters moved farther and farther away from the downtown corridor because of the flexibility and convenience that its infrastructure offered. Soon tram lines, trains, and other forms of mass transit began to go dormant in lieu of the automobile. Expressways acted like veins that brought people to and from the city.

Neighborhoods such as Detroit's east side began to fall victim to abandonment and the evolutionary regression of nature; waiting for a return to the former grandeur it once knew. The goal is not to return Detroit to "how it used to be", but in fact, how it will move forward in the next century.

Now Detroit is left with endless, vast open spaces and an abundance of vacant homes. Detroit has the existing infrastructure and potential to become one of the greenest and most radically viable cities in the world.

Through innovative approaches, the intention of this thesis project is how to assess these issues associated with abandoned structures; at the same time supporting Detroit in becoming the precedent by creating new, viable solutions for other cities facing a decline in population.

A City Without People

The initial ideas for this thesis began with the realistic thought of “The World Without Us” by Alan Weisman. The notions portrayed in his book, are of an apocalyptic environment after humans are gone; describing what would likely happen to occupied spaces once there is no longer anybody there to maintain them. It can be argued that some areas in Detroit are experiencing the same thing right now. However, it does give insight on what is likely to happen to an urban environment if these current issues of vacant spaces are not solved.

With nature having the ultimate upper hand, buildings have only one last solution; the wrecking ball. This occurrence is accelerating the destruction of buildings, which once housed vibrant communities, and returning it to a natural state as it was before people, as if it never had existed. This demolition brings cities into a situation of disrepair, starting over, forgetting what was ever created. Fortunately, there are humans still inhabiting cities such as Detroit. This allows us the opportunity of attempting to change the future of our dying cities.

Understood Conditions

The permanence of a city doesn't last; it remains a moment in time, a photograph of what it used to be. Detroit's urban plan has changed drastically over time; intentionally as well as unintentionally. It is how the site is reused that shows strength and the ability to adapt within the constantly evolving city.

James Corner interprets this idea in his book "Recovering Landscapes" where he describes how to approach landscapes within the city. "It is important to look forward rather than describe past and current conditions. Landscape is not given but made and remade; it is an inheritance that demands to be recovered, cultivated, and projected toward new ends." (Corner, 1999: pg. 12)

Corner also suggests that "reclaiming of sites might be measured in three ways: first in terms of the retrieval of memory and the cultural enrichment of place and time; second in terms of social program and utility, as new uses and activities are developed; and third in terms of ecological diversification and succession". (Corner, 1999: pg. 13)

The intentions of this project are to include all of the criteria of the environment, and by taking an approach to urban landscape, as James Corner would. The goals are as follows: First, to consider the past and present as an integral component to understand what is planned for the future. Second, it is important to identify what will become of the site or what the proposed function is; for which it will become an as-

set to the city. And third, to develop an outcome that is flexible enough to withstand current and future conditions while at the same time allowing change.

The landscape urbanism approach will establish the parameters and help guide this project. These ideas in theory will be tested on a particular site which was chosen on Detroit's east side, located just south of the city of Hamtramck. The neighborhood is bordered by Warren Ave. to the north, Forest Ave to the south, Moran St. to the east, and McDougall to the west. The rationale for why the site was chosen is because of the existence current occupancies embodied by the forgotten, lost remnants of what it used to be.

There is a strong sense of survival in this neighborhood. Residents in this particular area actually maintain the exterior look of nearby vacant houses; this smoke and mirror approach is used to keep unwanted, negative attention from disturbing their neighborhood. This illusion gives testimony to the desire to preserve their streets. This is evidence enough to prove that rethinking vacant homes will be beneficial to the community, as well as becoming a catalyst for future projects around the city of Detroit.

Assets and Liabilities

By identifying and working upon the existing layers of the city, it creates a solution with diversity and depth. Currently, Detroit has extensive layers of streets and alleyways from the original Cartesian road system which is still in use today. However, there is also evidence of the very Non-Cartesian, naturally made pathways that are extensively interwoven and link destinations between the vacant spaces.

Detroit east side has many assets, most of which are argued to be liabilities; but for purpose of this thesis, they will be identified as assets. On Detroit's east side, some neighborhoods have 50 percent or more vacant lots, and anywhere from 17 to 60 percent of vacant houses. (Data Driven Detroit) In some cases these areas within the city have more open space than the suburban areas around them.

As the vacant homes stand testament to the elements and time, they rapidly succumb to a state of disrepair and threaten the safety of neighborhoods. Once they pose danger, it has been a recent goal of Detroit's City Council to tear these buildings down. Just as fast as they were left to become abandoned, they are gone overnight giving way to yet another visibly indecent empty lot.

The main concerns and liabilities for Detroit have always been crime and abandonment. This thesis project is aimed at solving not only these current issues of safety but also by protecting the neighborhood and highlighting these areas, rather than leaving them as they are. If

left unattended they are likely to develop into a "hot spot" for illegal activity due to their lack of attention.

There are many other factors that need to be considered; such as the economical and environmental components that create a strong and workable city. By giving these neighborhoods new public amenities and attracting attention to forgotten areas, these issues are usually solved because of the positive influence associated with public use. Empty lots give elasticity to environments, constraints are not as strong, and possibilities to create something new are endless. This flexibility offers endless options to test a theory which hasn't been conventional or done before.

It is also important to respect the existing conditions; such as homes still being occupied, which in many cases are obviously present. In some areas on Detroit's east side, there remains one or two houses on a block; a block made up of about twenty lots. The interesting thing is that people still live in these homes and have no intentions of moving out.

The Data

Currently property values in Detroit, as well as in many other Midwest cities, are very low; and in some cases you can buy a house or lot in Detroit for next to nothing. Property values are primarily dependent on the surrounding area. These values vary depending on the visible and physical conditions nearby as well as the convenience of mobility.

Research conducted in 2006, by Susan M. Wachter and Kevin C. Gillen from The Wharton School at The University of Pennsylvania, show impacts on Philadelphia property value when located next to certain variables.

Values of homes dropped 20 percent when adjacent to a vacant lot. However, if that same vacant lot was stabilized and greened then values went up 17 percent in value. Also, improvements to streetscapes raised property value by 28 percent. (Wachter & Gillen, 2006: pg. 10, Appendix)

This data proves that creating public green spaces positively affect neighborhoods. By establishing green, sustainable areas, the liabilities within a city such as crime and abandonment can be undoubtedly reduced. The irony is that the spaces actually causing most of the problems are in fact the solution to fix those same problems.

By linking dilapidated spaces on Detroit's east side and by plugging them into a larger scale greenway system, it will create higher property values due to added mobility within neighborhoods. This will be achieved by implementing non motorized pathways centrally within the core of deteriorated neighborhoods. "Because planners cannot control where vacancy and abandonment occur, a shrinking city needs a green infrastructure plan to connect its green assets and strategically guide resources and reuse initiatives." (Schilling & Logan, 2008: pg. 457)

Greenways are in full swing in Detroit; current projects have already been under construction or are in developmental phases. Projects such as The Detroit Riverfront, Dequindre Cut, Conner Creek, Midtown Loop, Southwest Detroit/Dearborn, Lyndon Avenue, Corktown-Mexicantown, Hamtramck, and Fort Street greenways are well underway. (MTGA) This thesis project intends to create a new linkage through the heart of Detroit's east side passing through its forgotten neighborhoods.

The Project

The approach this thesis takes is to identify and test four vacant houses that would become the focal point of the new proposed greenway. The existing residential ruins will be rethought, repurposed, and reprogrammed to support a shift toward public used space. This will result in a positive amenity for the city. The theoretical objective is to start with small scale proposals which would fit into the large scale networks. This is the most manageable method to accomplish the goals and criteria set out by this project.

The four houses will undergo a process of dismantling. Each house will be stripped of materials which are not needed or wouldn't survive the outdoor elements; they will be sorted, recycled and reused in most cases. The structural systems will be identified and preserved. The purpose is to retain as much of the usable structural space as possible. Non load bearing walls will be removed and spatial layouts will be altered.

The structural system or skeleton of the house will support the new repurposed use. The stable, yet altered, structure will prove beneficial to new theoretical arrangements proposed. At the same time, costs will be cut from utilizing what is already there instead of starting completely over with new construction.

Traditional layouts will be critiqued and new design concepts will be adopted. In theory, the chosen houses will become the nodes at which new paths and links are defined. The rea-

son for choosing a house is because it is a transitory object. A house changes and is a temporary object.

The end result will be completely different than what a traditional home intends to be, it will be of a space that extrudes outward from its core into the public sphere. The four houses will anchor the proposed greenway as an integral part of the neighborhood. It will not just be an element that passes through, but rather a system that understands the existing layering of the site and proves flexible to change.

In the article "Object to be Destroyed" written by Pamela M. Lee, she discusses the work done by Gordon Matta-Clark. His 1974 project was to buy a house not for its value, but for the value of the lot it was on. His work showed the house as impermanent, but at the same time identifying the land on which it stands as permanent.

The article states: "It was purchased not for the sake of the building, a banal thing in a decrepit neighborhood, but for the value of its lot. In short, it was an act of real estate speculation dramatized by the fate of the building itself: the house was to be demolished in a few months time". (Lee 2001: pg. 11)

His critique was on the idea of privacy within a house. He was interested in what happens to space once it was cut open and made vulnerable to the public. He questions the preconceptions of a residential environment after it has been altered or tampered with.

He realizes this through his investigations that, “It is the structural integrity of the building, its seeming opacity and totality, that is read as alienating and divisive; whereas its dissection by the artist opens onto the communal horizon of its audience”. (Lee 2001: pg. 12)

This critiques the purpose of buildings and of their function; how these changes alter cities through their transformations. In Matta-Clark’s project, as well as the ideas instilled in this thesis project, it theorizes of an alteration of a temporary structure. The analysis in a shift from a private entity into a public entity will prove to be essential. While this thesis proposal affects neighborhoods at a micro scale level, it becomes a catalyst that provokes change on a macro scale level as well.

The Result

The final project was narrowed down to two houses. The design implemented was to connect two separate houses with extrusions of new architectural elements to connect the spaces. This provided minimal construction to create a larger more unified space.

Those design principles were used to test the idea that the leftover houses could provide new use for a much larger, more expansive system. This creates connections and new public spaces out of existing spaces. The two houses become an architectural approach on what to do with the empty houses that lie within the greenway.

The total greenway is 3.5 miles long. It weaves in and out between the abandoned properties. As more parcels of land become forgotten, the greenway expands and grows as needed. The repurpose and reconstruction of space is needed for various programs that will support the community greenway system. The transformation of the houses happens organically on a needs basis. The system of reusing vacant homes will continue through the area providing new and positive growth for each neighborhood.

This project as well as the research proves there is a viable, economical, and sustainable solution that can be used on Detroit's east side. The project intends to theorize and question cultural change from within; a change that seeks to understand the advantages and issues associated with the abandonment found in declining cities. It is a change of mind set on how

cities should view their ruins. It now offers the possibility to see vacant spaces as an opportunity for change, rather than a hazard that restricts change.

Although this thesis and its ideas are not complete and have opportunity to develop even further, the end result proved that these theoretical strategies when they were implemented into real life situations and neighborhoods are possible. It became a successful conclusion to demonstrate that these theories are possible through design process. The goal is to realize the initiative of positive change within areas where it is not otherwise considered; and return neighborhoods back to their cities by rethinking their ruins.

Exploration Through Video

The goal was to understand a life cycle of an urban core at many levels to visually see the many different aspects of interaction between the city and its user. It started with investigations into the busy element of humans occupying spaces. It then moved on to spaces where human interaction was almost nonexistent and forgotten. This exploration was important because it allowed the movement of space to be seen in more depth than just a stagnant photograph. It went beyond by highlighting sound and movement within these two very different environments.







Prypiat, Ukraine has been abandoned since 1986 due to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. The city once had nearly 50,000 residents before the nuclear accident. It now is completely left untouched and maintained. For two decades it has remained a testament to the elements and time. Nostalgic of what would happen if people were gone.

These photos represent the result of an infrastructure without human maintenance.





Centralia, Pennsylvania is an old mining town. Its population peaked at 2,000 during its heyday. In 1962 the mines caught on fire and are still burning today. There are only 7 people living there as of 2010.

This is a good town to examine because it has been destroyed both by humans and nature. Many of the buildings were torn down after residents left. However, the infrastructure is still visible. The natural elements continuously break down the traces of inhabitancy.







Varosha, Cyprus was a major tourist destination in the 1970's. The city is located on the Island of Cyprus. In 1974 after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus the city was closed off for a militarized zone. People were forced to move out within three days.

Today it sits untouched by human hands. It has not been visited for 30 years. Over those years there had been talks of opening the beach front city back up to the public. These plans were never developed and the city sits beyond repair. It slowly awaits its demise from the natural forces.







A local architect bought the Hamtramck, MI house for 3,000 dollars. The structural system was stabilized and the house was raised from the foundation with jacks to appear to be floating above surrounding houses. This idea of changing the function of space can be carried over into rethinking vacant buildings.





Firebreak is project done by the DCDC. It identifies neglected and dangerous abandoned houses located in Detroit, MI. The houses covered with various materials to attract positive attention as well as keep people out of it. It is also keeping with each community's identity. The projects become a collaboration of local designers and residents.





9b



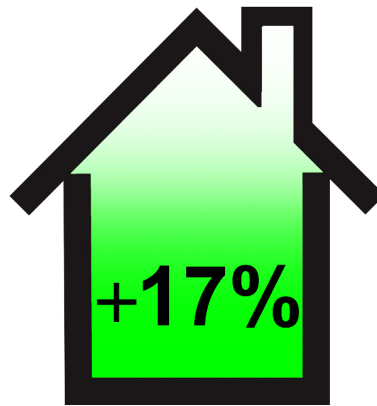
9c

Students from the University of Michigan bought the Detroit house for 500 dollars and transformed it into their design studio. They changed the idea of a conventional space, and critiqued the idea of a house.



UNATTENDED LOT

VS.



ATTENDED LOT (IN TERMS OF VALUE)

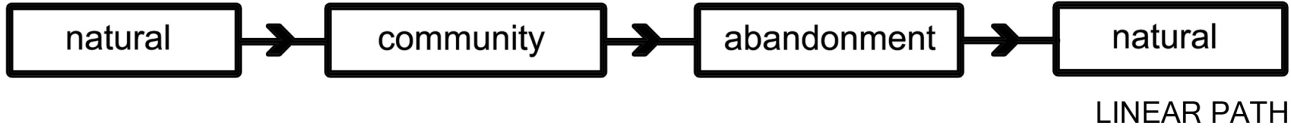


detroit's east side

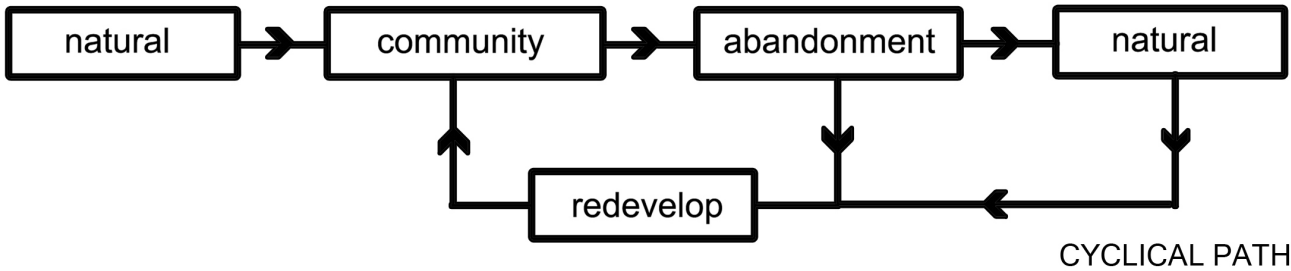


This chart represents the rise of the industrial era and now the decline of industry and the slow return of natural elements.

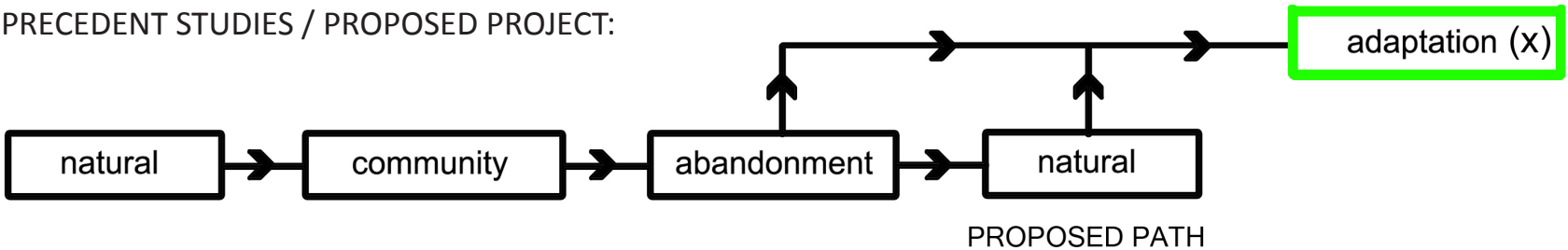
CASE STUDIES:



STANDARD PROJECTS:



PRECEDENT STUDIES / PROPOSED PROJECT:





This is a scenario without people. It represents many of the case studies shown earlier. It goes linearly from a built environment; untouched and returned to a natural form.



The cyclical path represents what is usually done; the old is replaced with the new. Vacant structures are cleared and the land awaits new development. Usually modular forms replace what was once there.

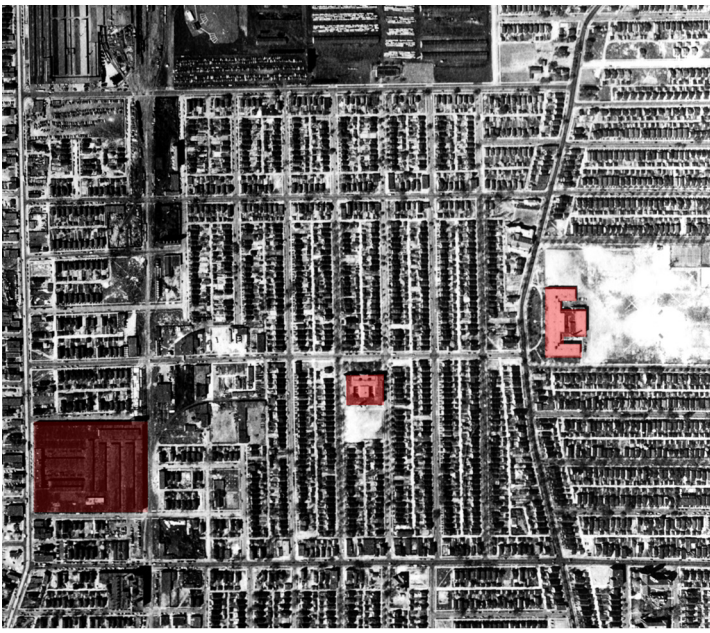


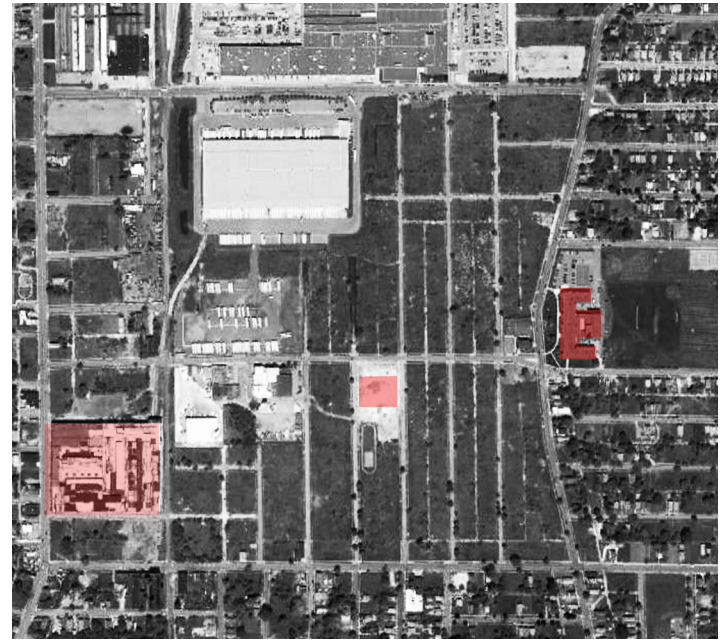
My Proposal is a project that connects vacant land and houses while respecting the changing environment nearby by using abandonment as an asset rather than liability. The intention is to weave through pockets of vacant land without disrupting the already occupied spaces.



The New York High Line started as an industrial railway. Potential was realized after nature reclaimed it, and a peaceful tranquility of the space within the city suggested a greenway. It is now a popular destination for New York residents to walk.

The Dequindre Cut, located in Detroit MI, used to be an Industrial, sublevel space in the heart of the city designated for railcars bringing in raw materials to factories. After years of abandonment, it became a natural greenway created by the absence of people. Once again, it offered opportunity to utilize the space as a public entity. The Dequindre cut is now a popular route to bike from Downtown to the busy Eastern Market.





maps taken from DTE Aerial Photo Collection

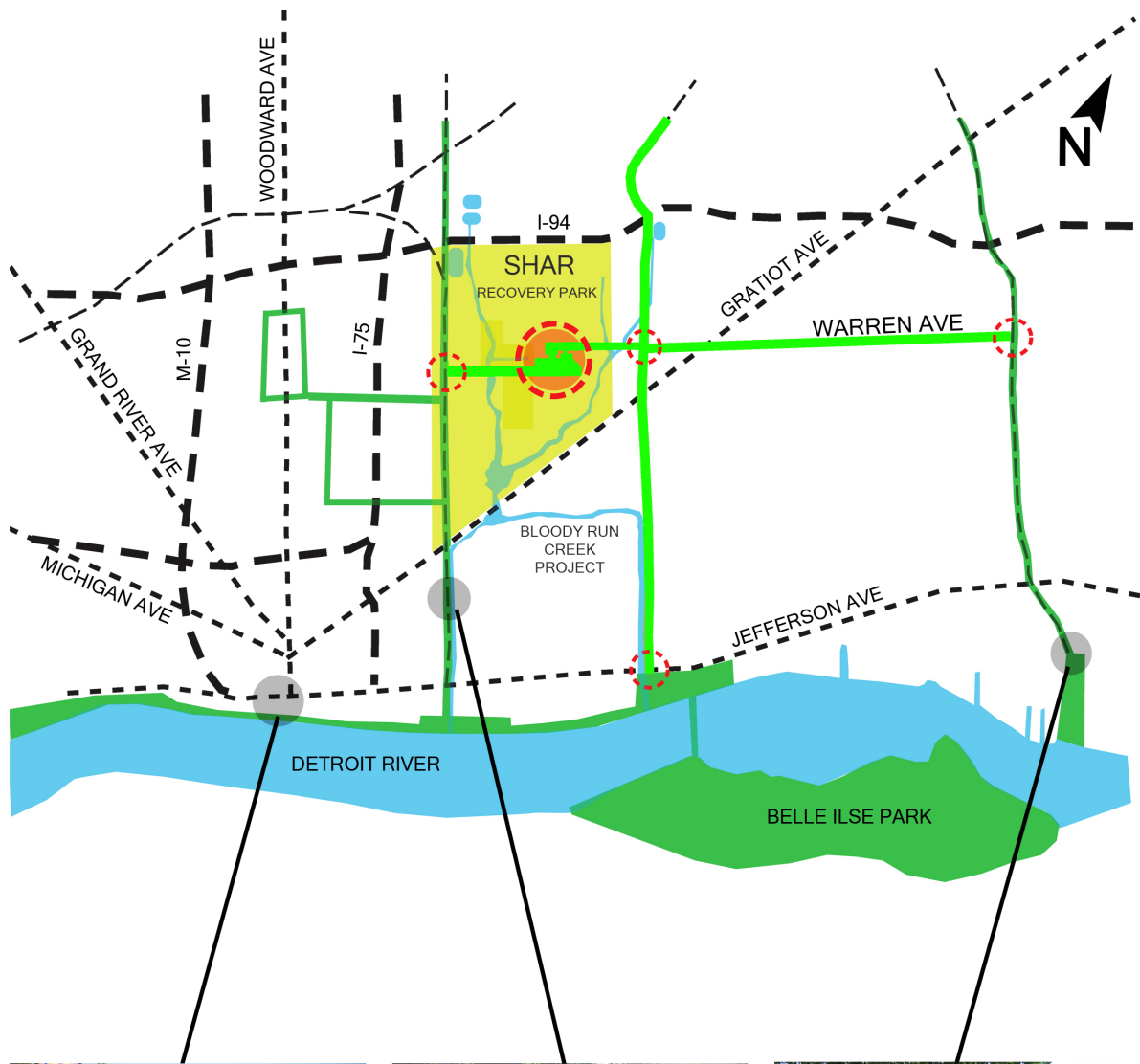
The maps show the density loss in housing stock from 1949 through 2010. It shows the patterns of movement from the inner city into the suburbs. The red squares signify the buildings that remained stable. This site is located site at Georgia and St. Cyril Streets. It was the first site that was examined to test the thesis. However the vacancy was so vast that it posed a problem to implement the design concept within a “blank slate”. The more appropriate site is one that is made of both abandoned and occupied spaces coexisting.

SITE 1 - The Urban Prairie

These images are from the first considered site at Georgia and St. Caryl. Here streets had become urban prairies. There was no more human interaction, just nature reclaiming its territory. Although this “blank canvas” was beautiful and peaceful, it had too much open space to really test the ideas in the thesis.







RIVER WALK



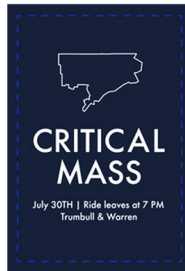
DEQUINDRE CUT



CONNER CREEK



CONNECTING THE VACANT STRUCTURES



EXISTING ASSETS

SITE 2 - Warren/Forest Corridor

The second site was the most appropriate location. By utilizing Detroit's east side and creating a new connecting greenway. The project is plugging into an already existing larger network of greenway systems. There are many initiatives already going on in the area and it is important to understand what it existing and make use of those assets.

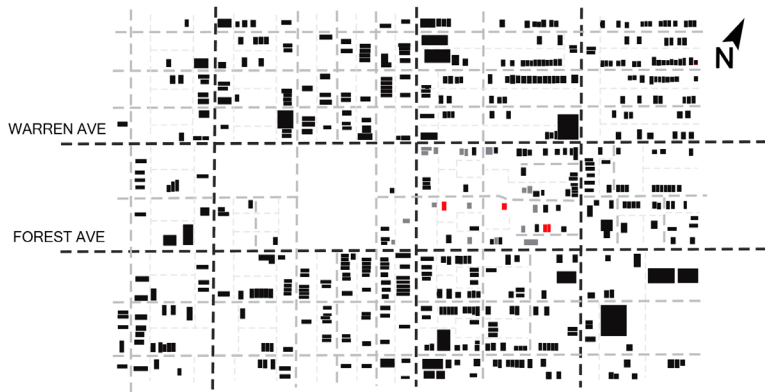
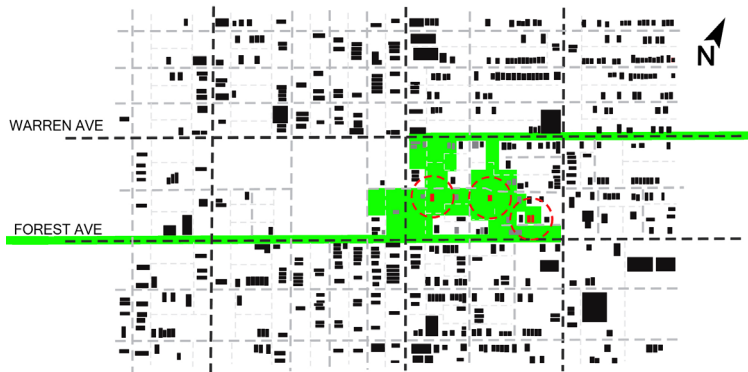
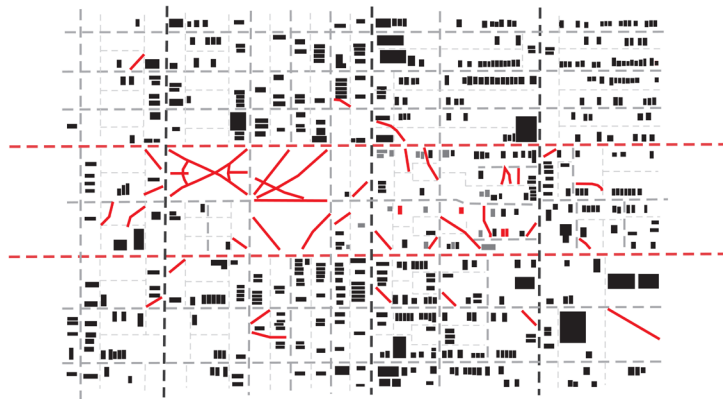


FIGURE GROUND STUDY



PROPOSED GREENWAY





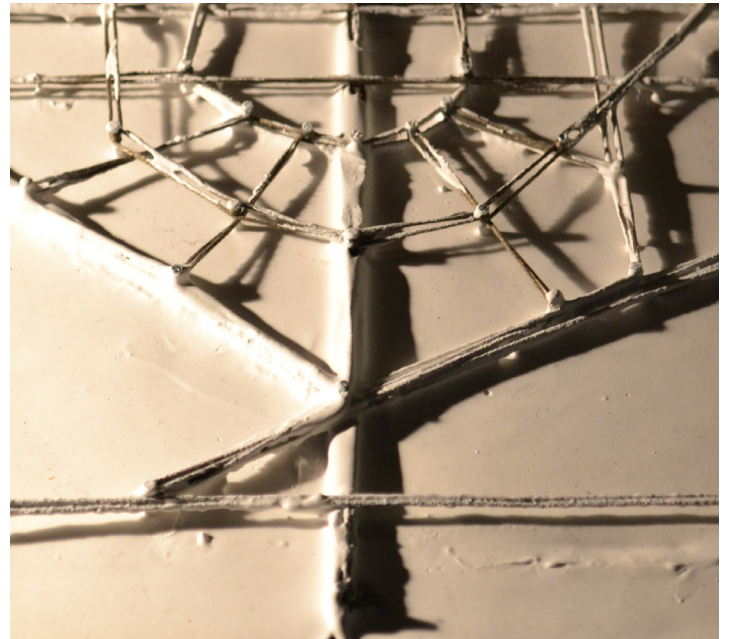
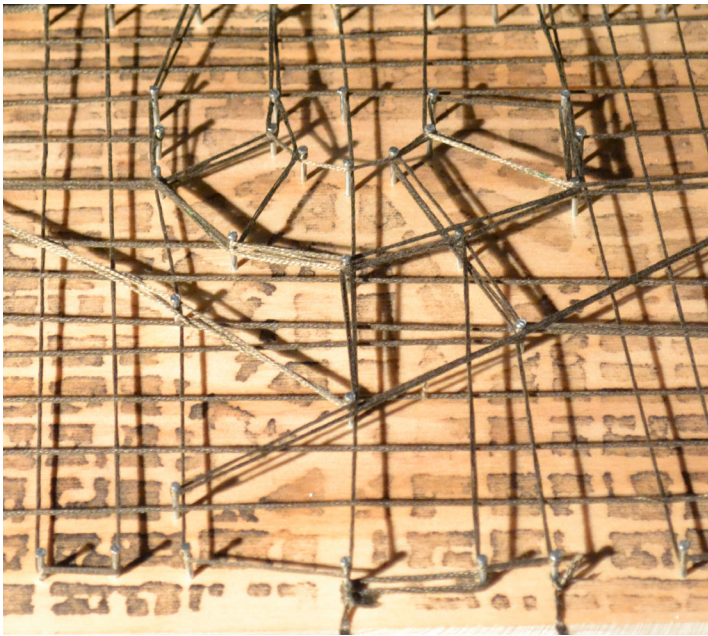
The site was chosen because of its unique environment. It has many vacant spaces as well as already occupied spaces. The intention was to find a site that faces these challenges. It is not a clean slate, it is a layered, complex location. By addressing the problems the solutions can be realized.



1916



1950





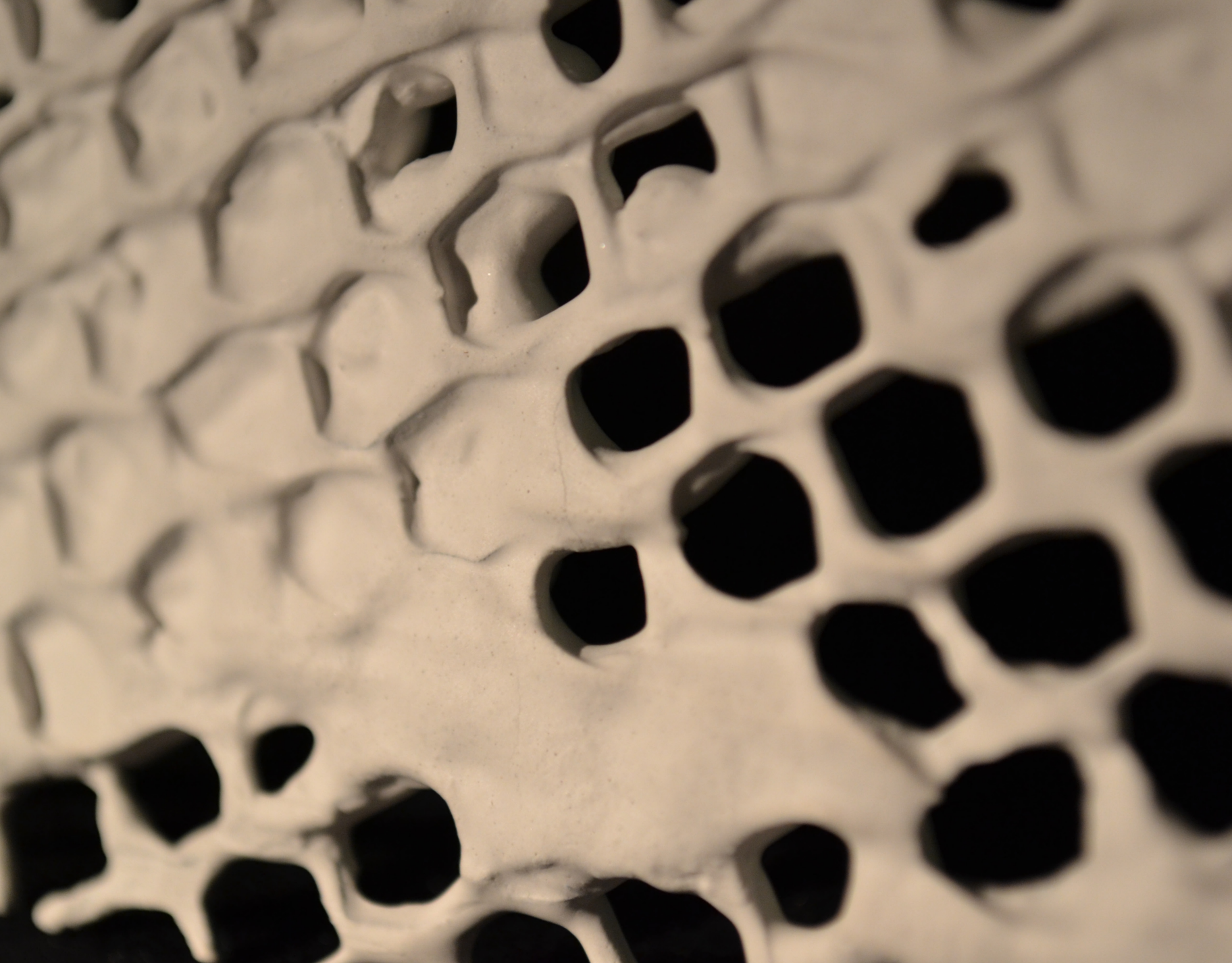
1960

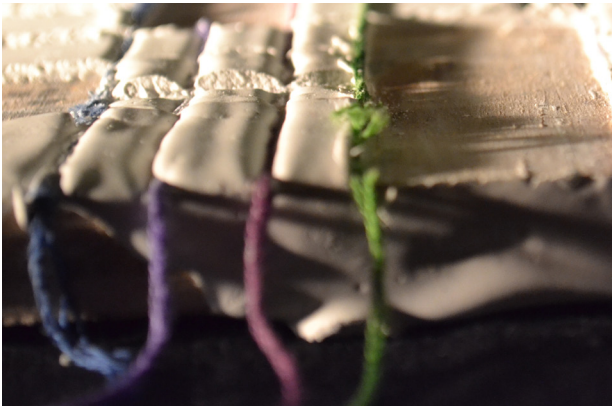
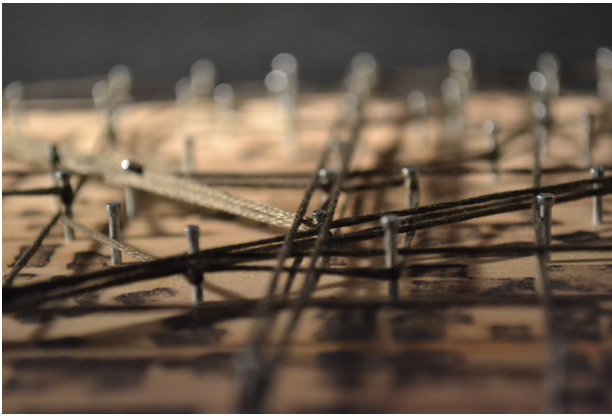


1994

maps taken from "Stalking Detroit"

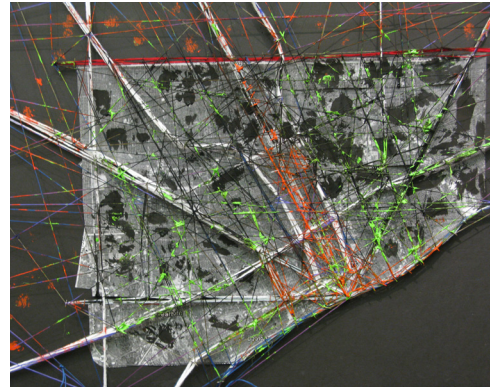
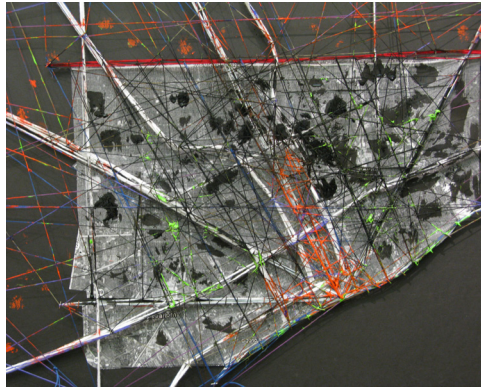
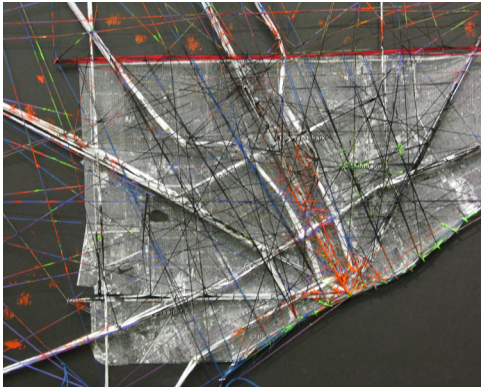
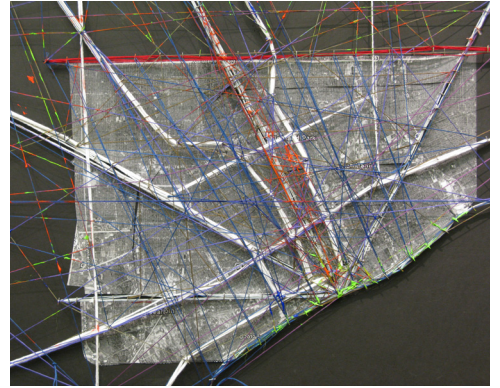
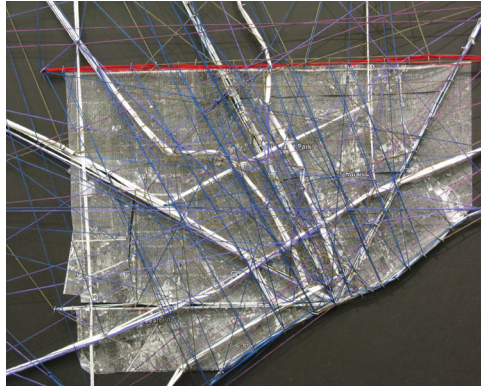
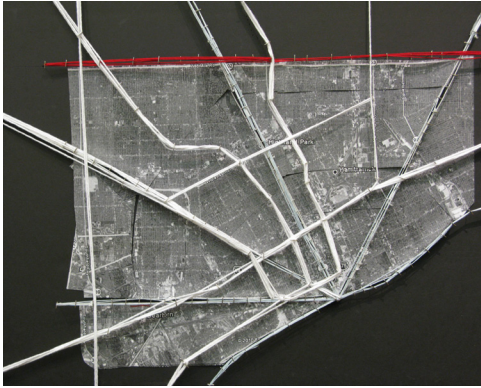
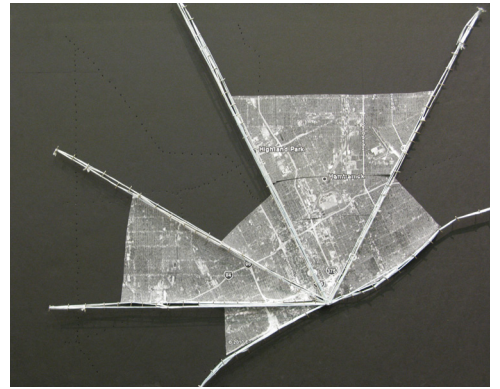
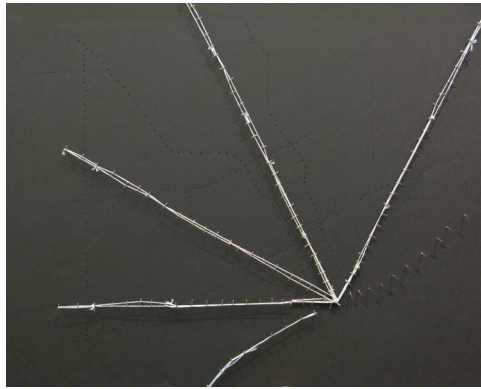
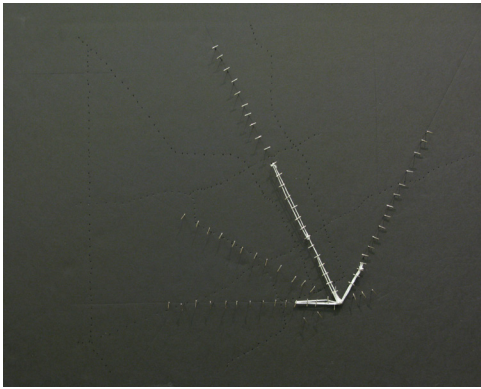






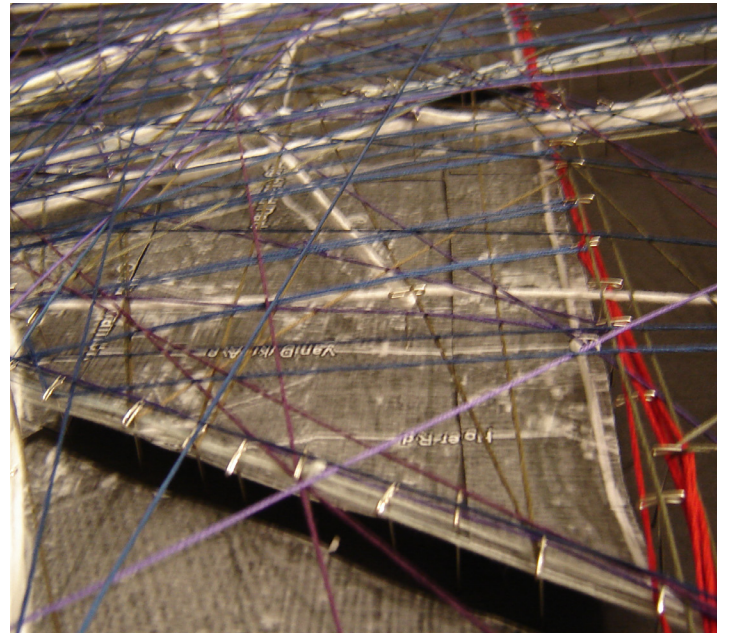
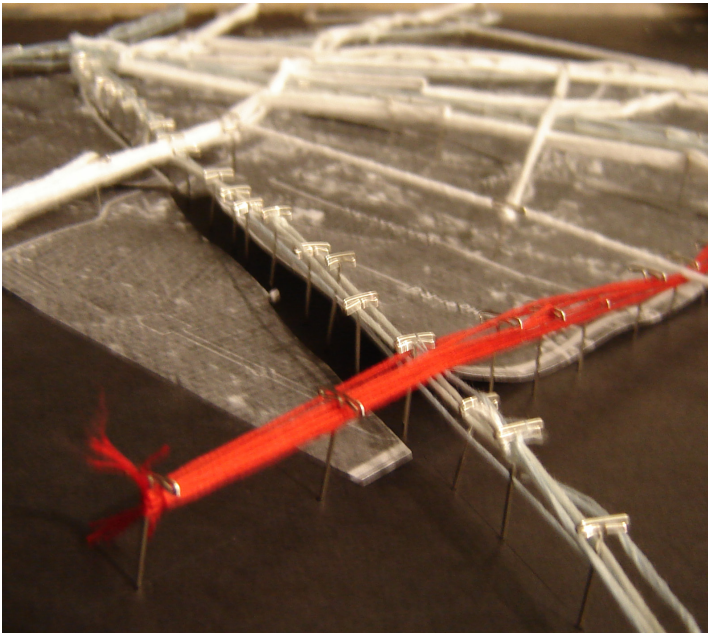
Hands On Explorations

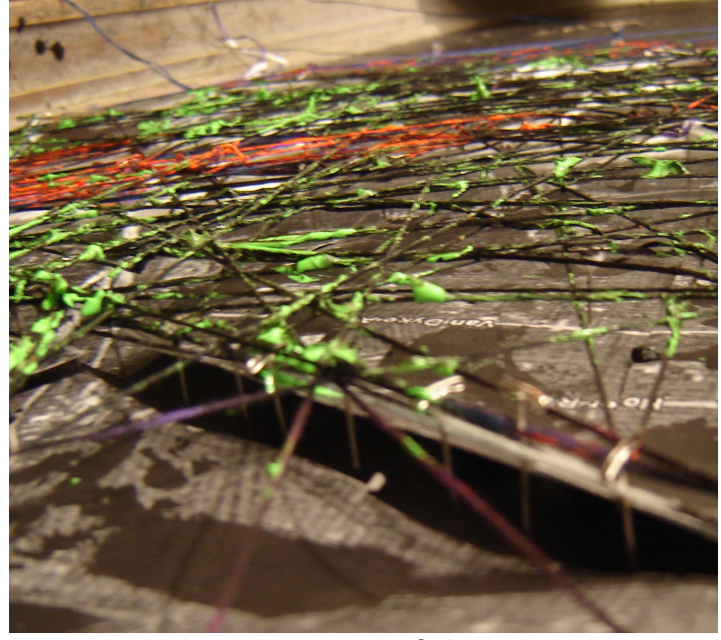
Study models were created to understand the fluidity of landscapes, and how to preserve them using a landscape urbanism approach. Landscapes are defined by what is already there and what opportunity exists for change. These models were part of the design process to understand how a greenway could weave through an existing site such as the one given.



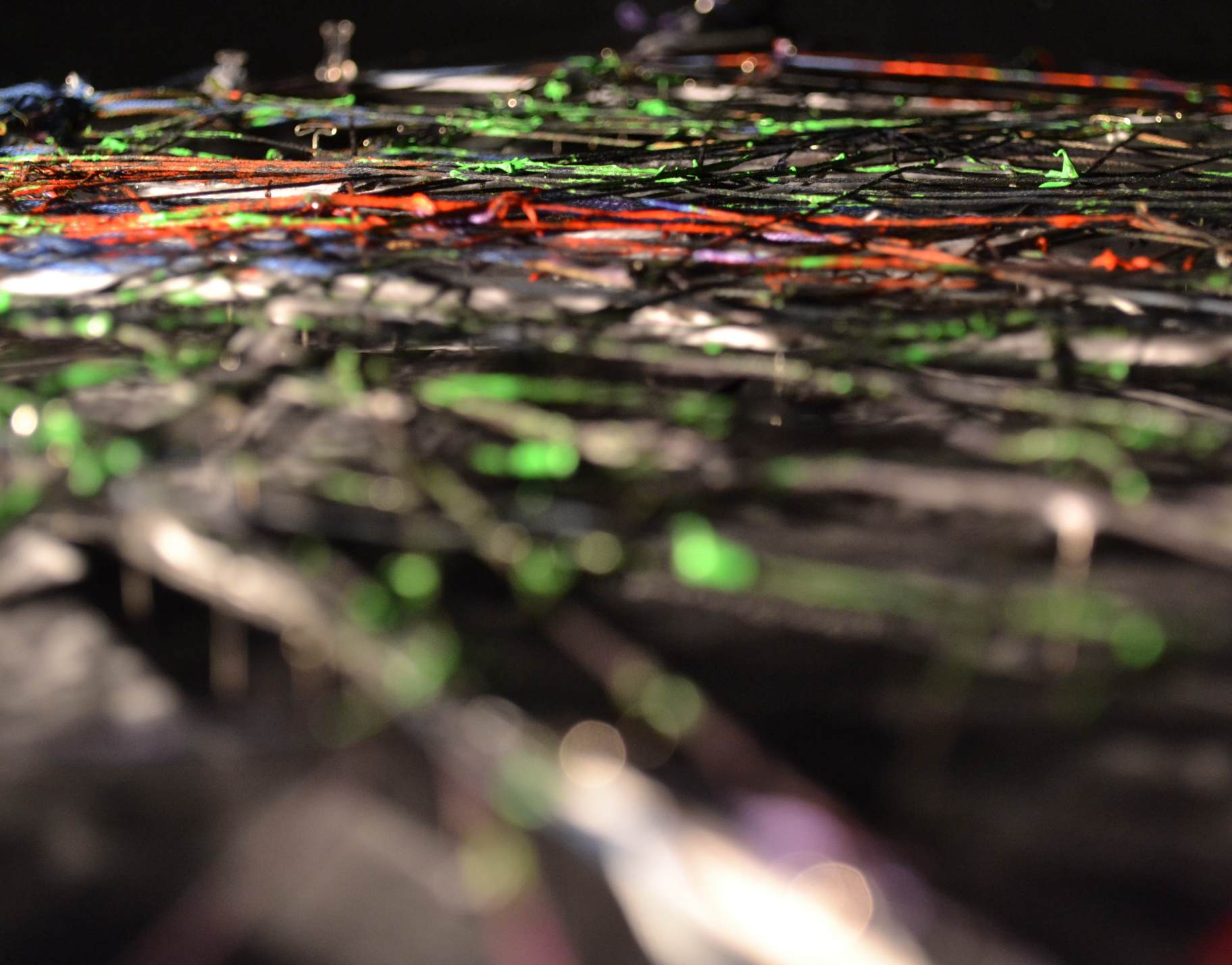
Timeline Mapping

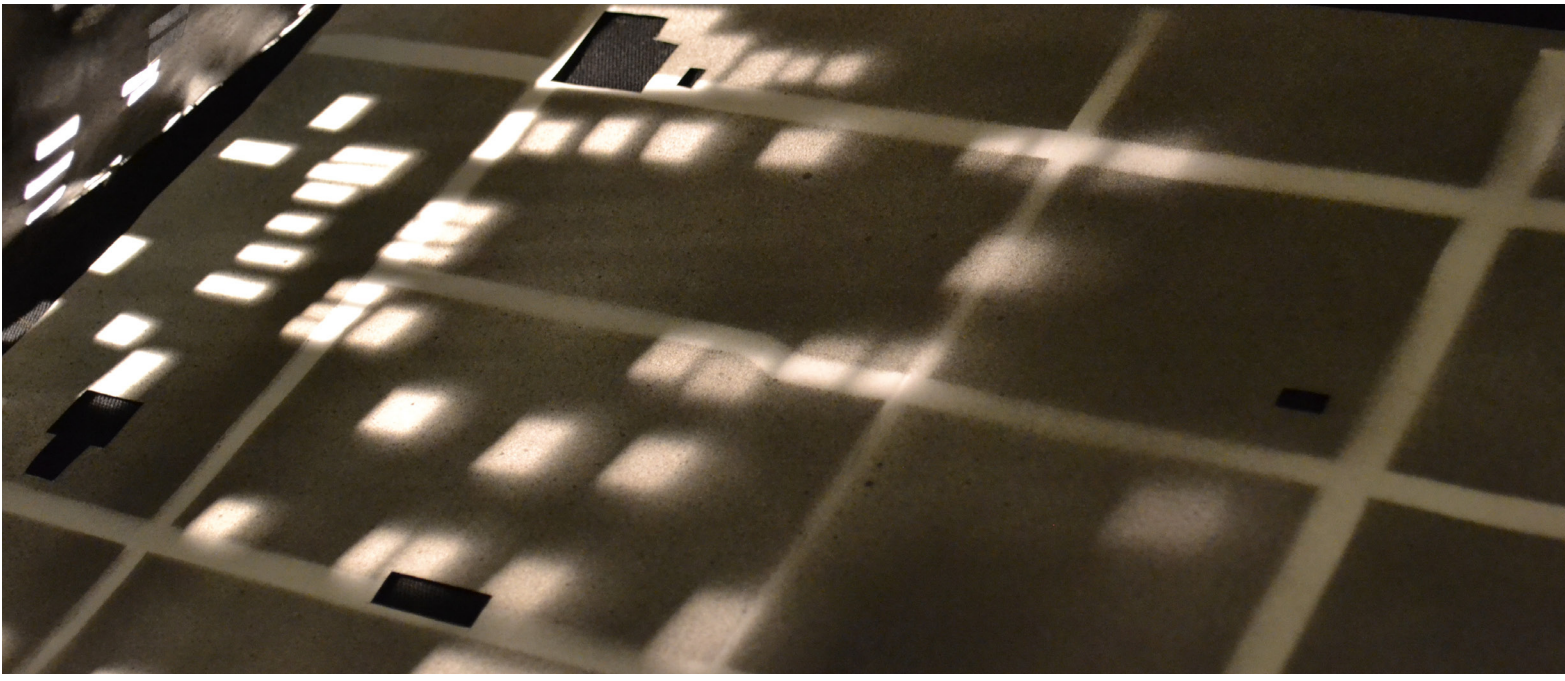
This time line evolved thorough mapping out Detroit and its roadways, neighborhoods, and abandoned areas. The use of string and paint signify areas of utilized areas and forgotten areas. The orange paint shows areas of interest. The black paint represents vacant areas, and the green paint shows areas where the natural elements are visibly taking over the landscape.

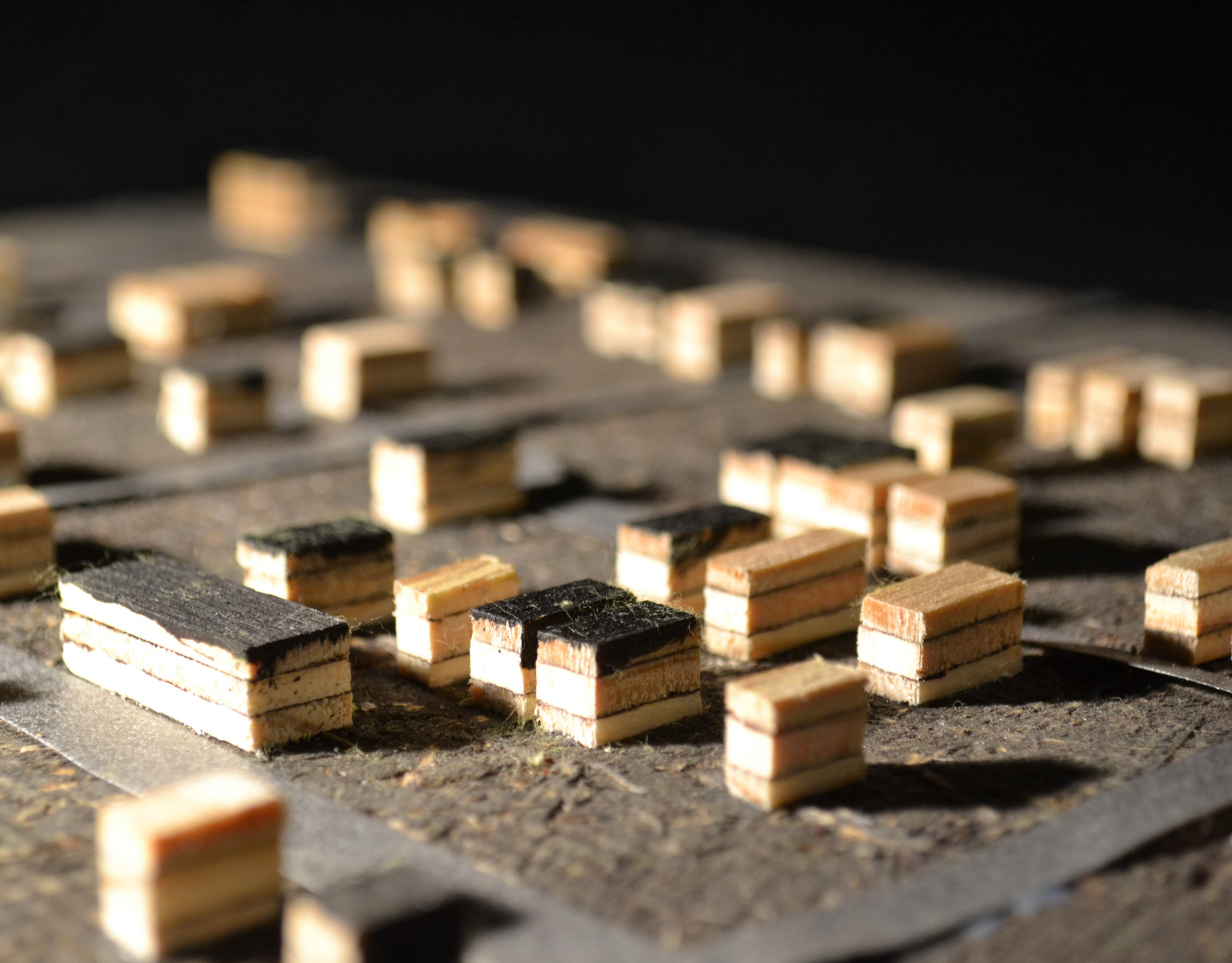


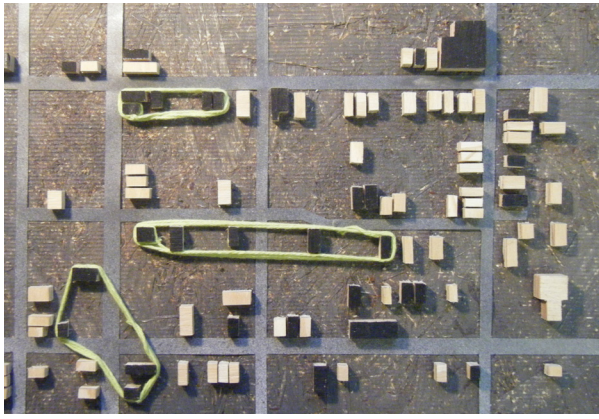


close up detail of the time line maps



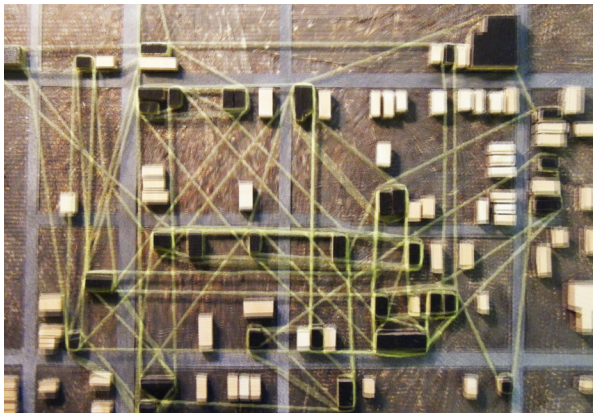
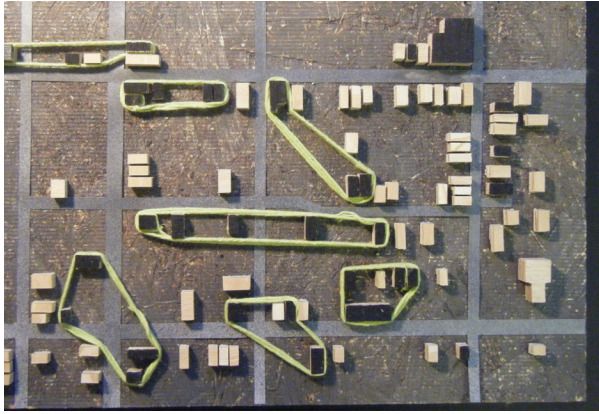




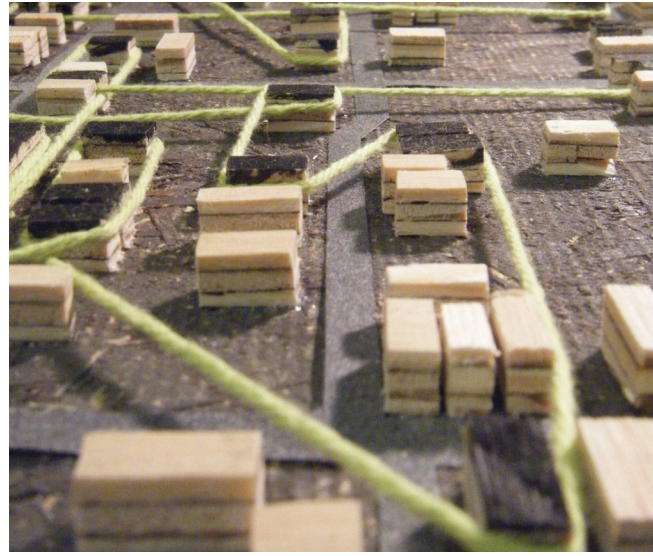
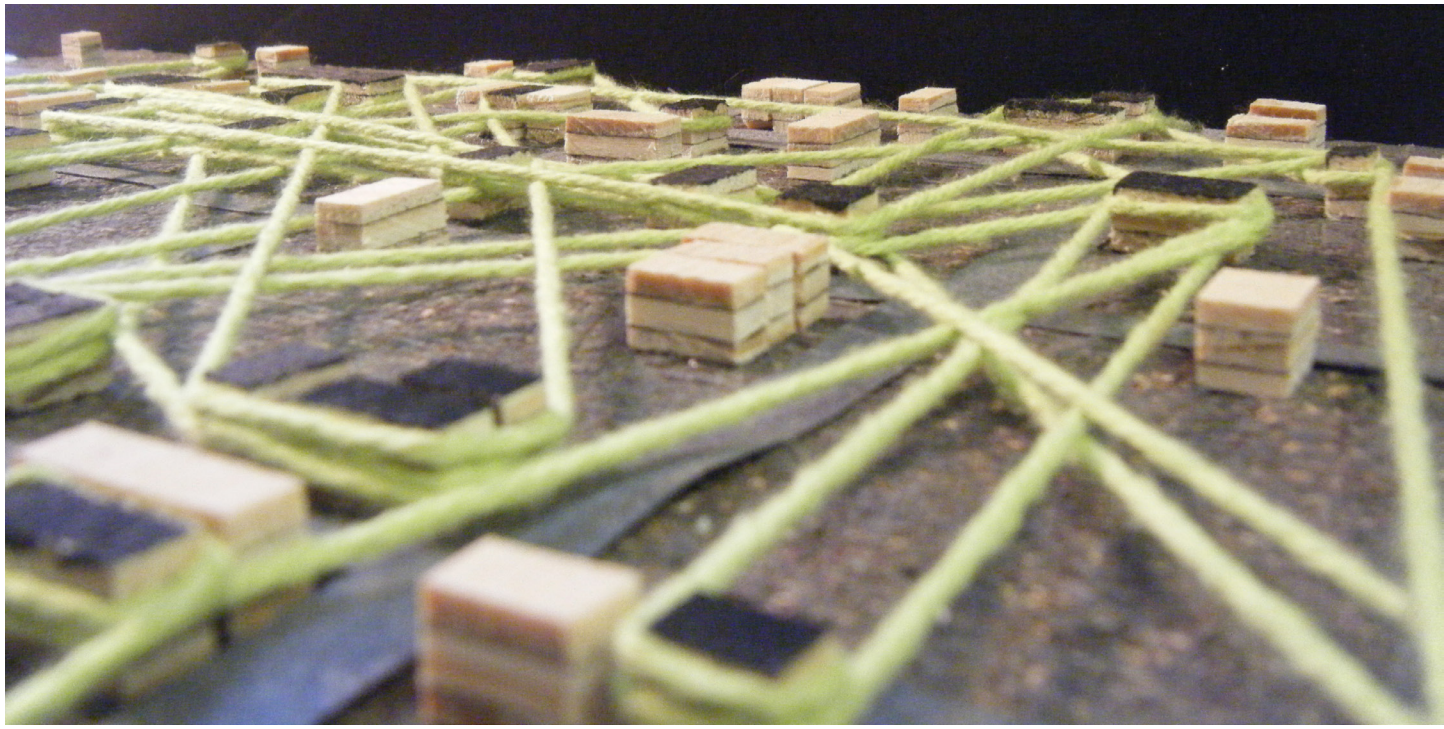


Vacant House Study

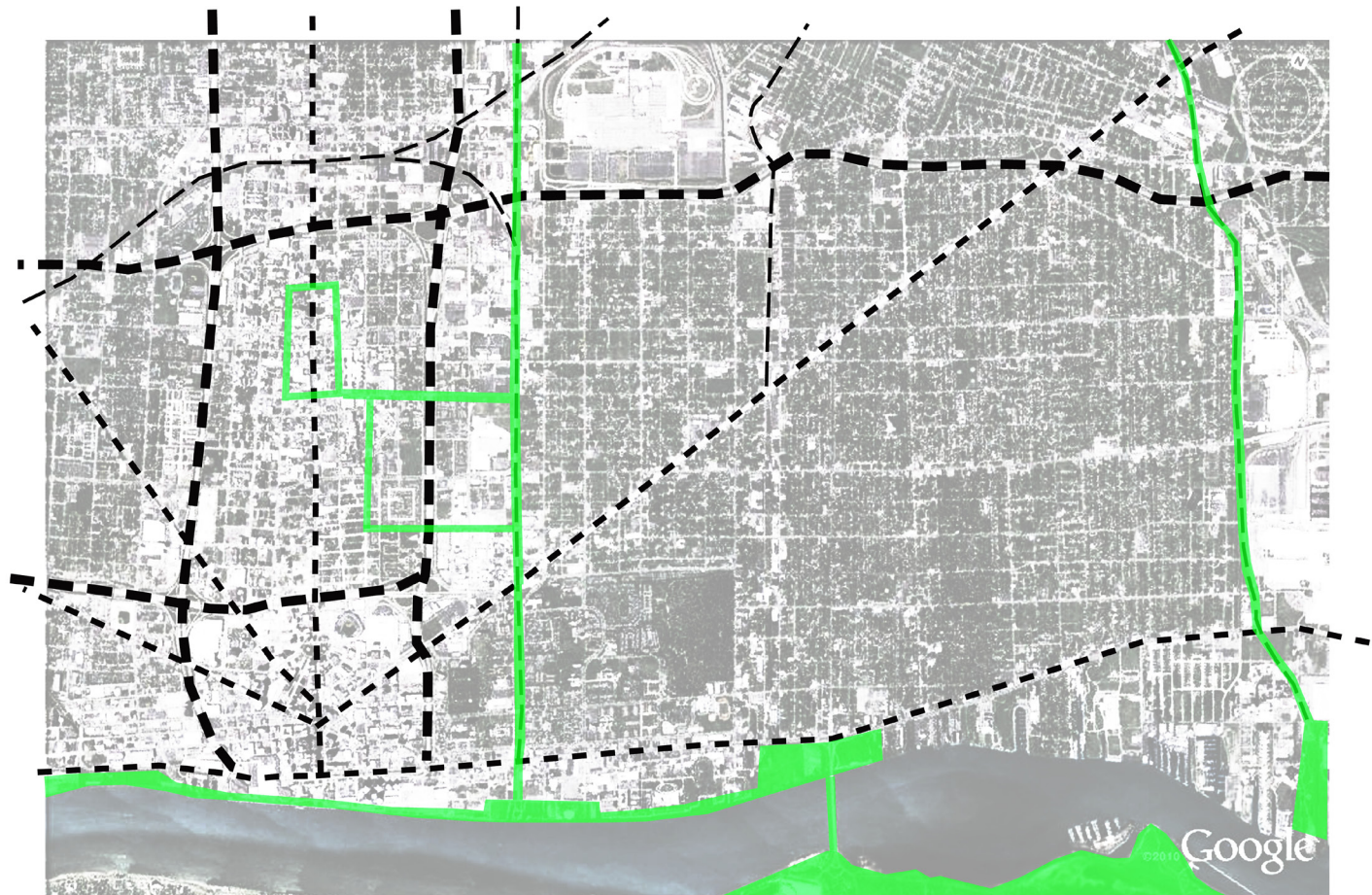
This was an investigation into the pockets of vacant houses. The string weaves between these spaces connecting them and highlighting them. The intention was to create a system or network of connecting all these areas.



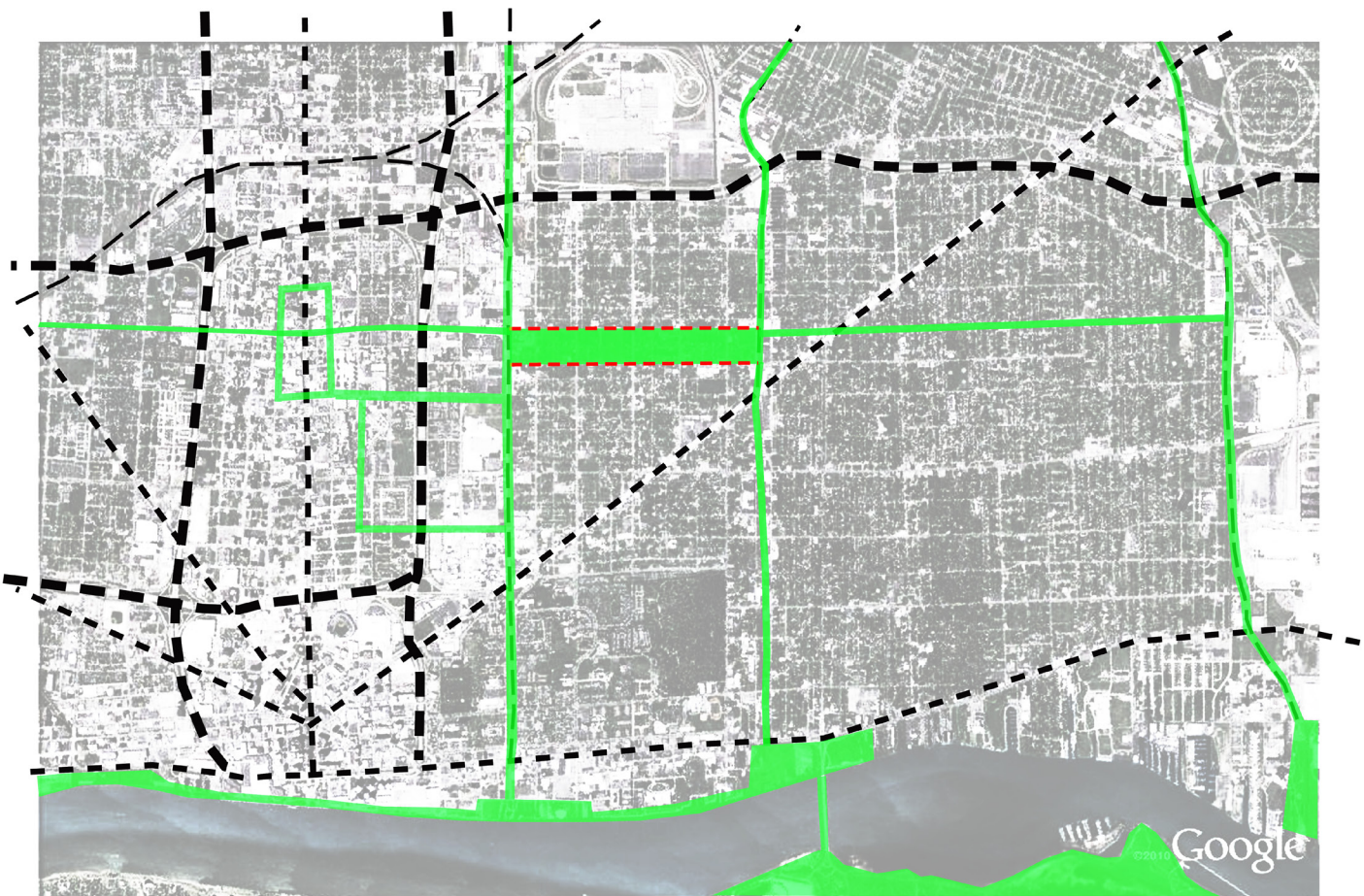




project development 1

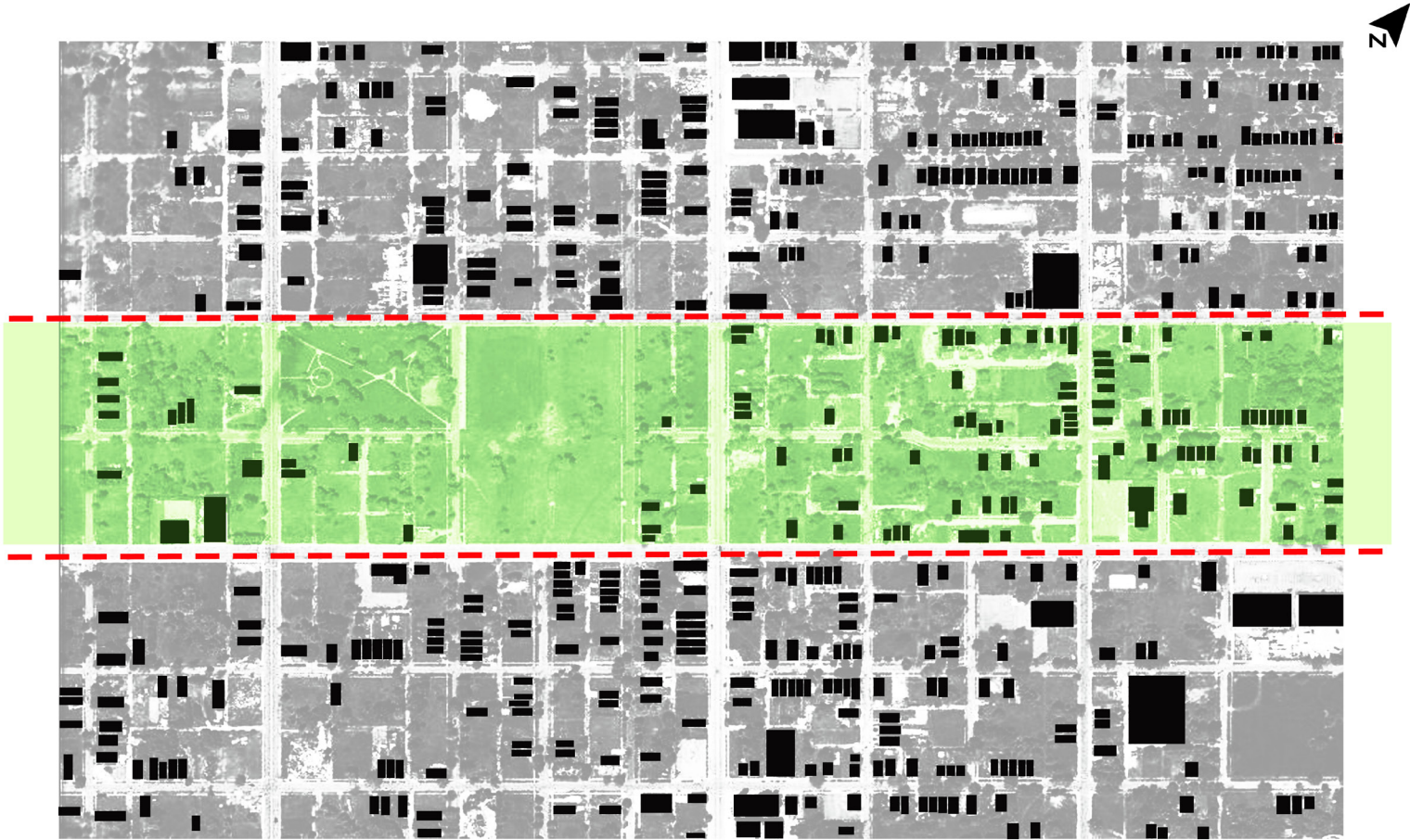


REGIONAL LEVEL - EXISTING GREEN SPACE CONNECTIONS



REGIONAL LEVEL - PROPOSED GREENBELT AND CONNECTIONS

development 1 - greenbelt



COMMUNITY LEVEL - FIGURE GROUND MAPPING

FOREST PARK / EAST POLETOWN



1949



1961

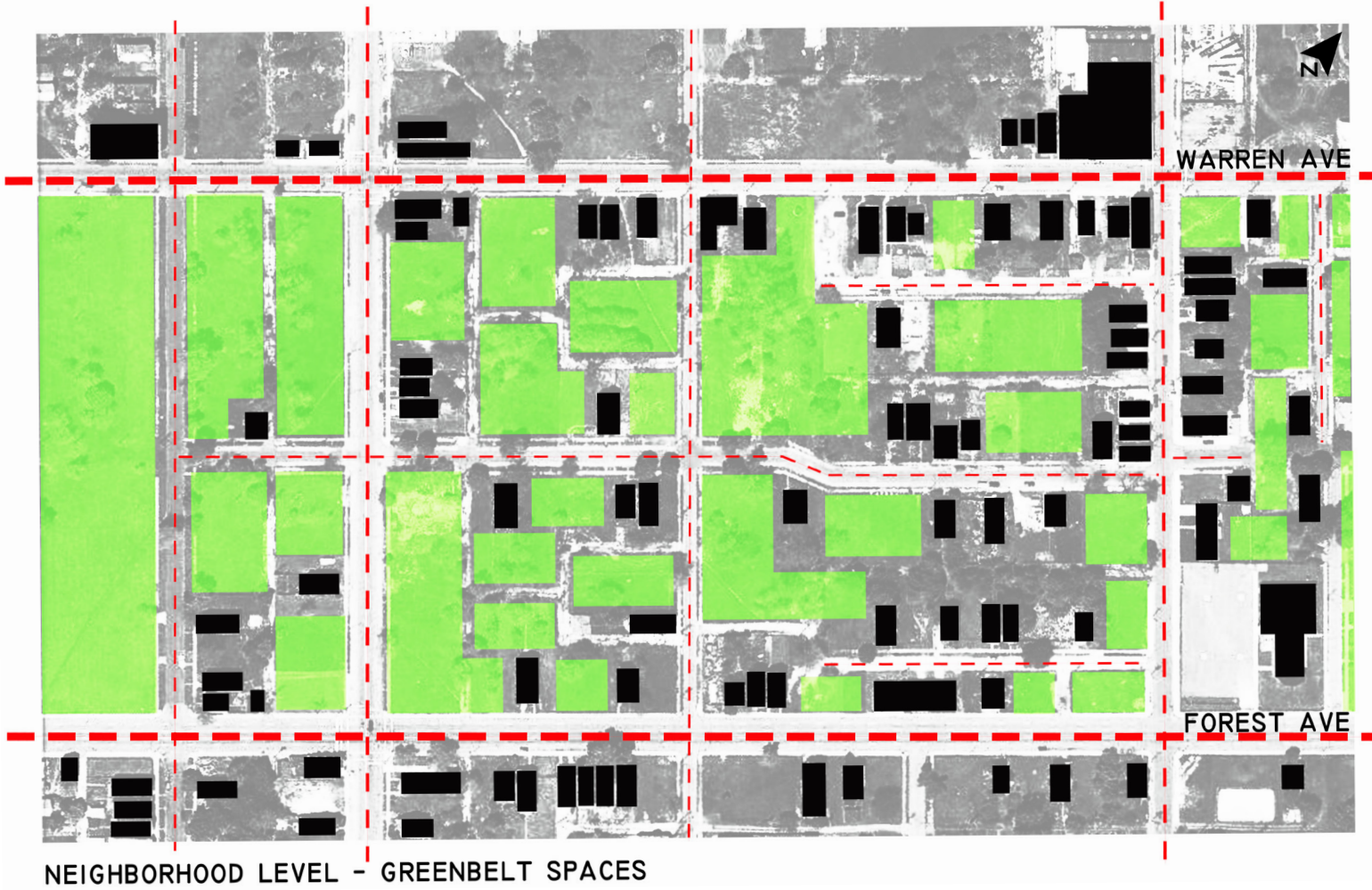


1981

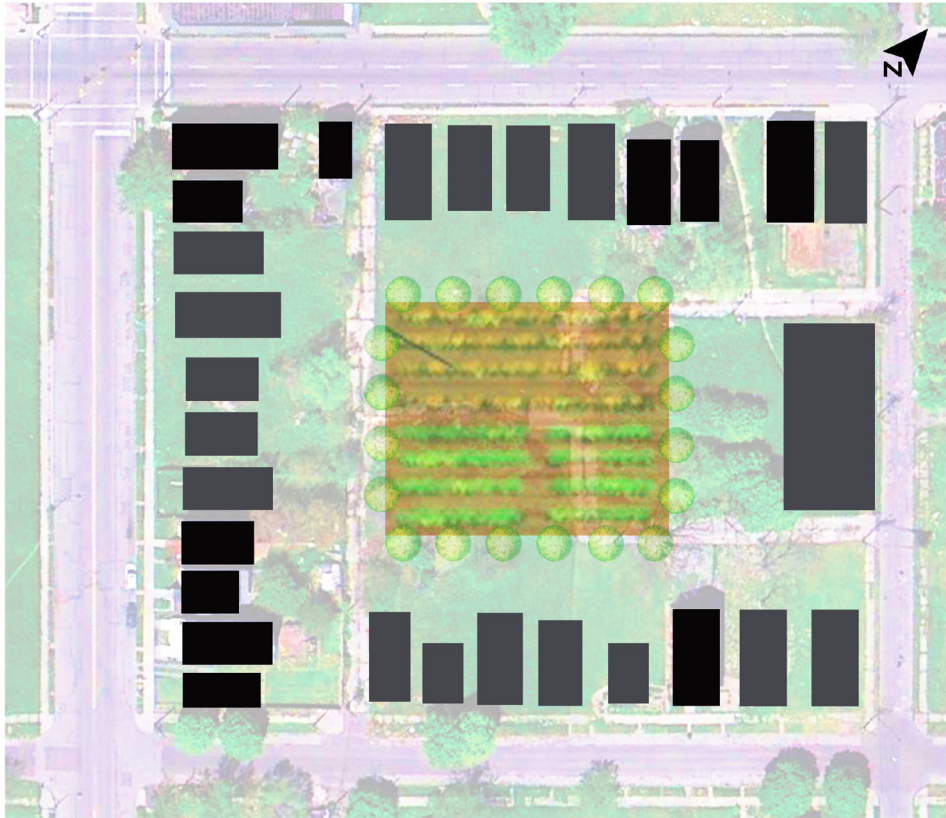


1997





development 1 - typologies



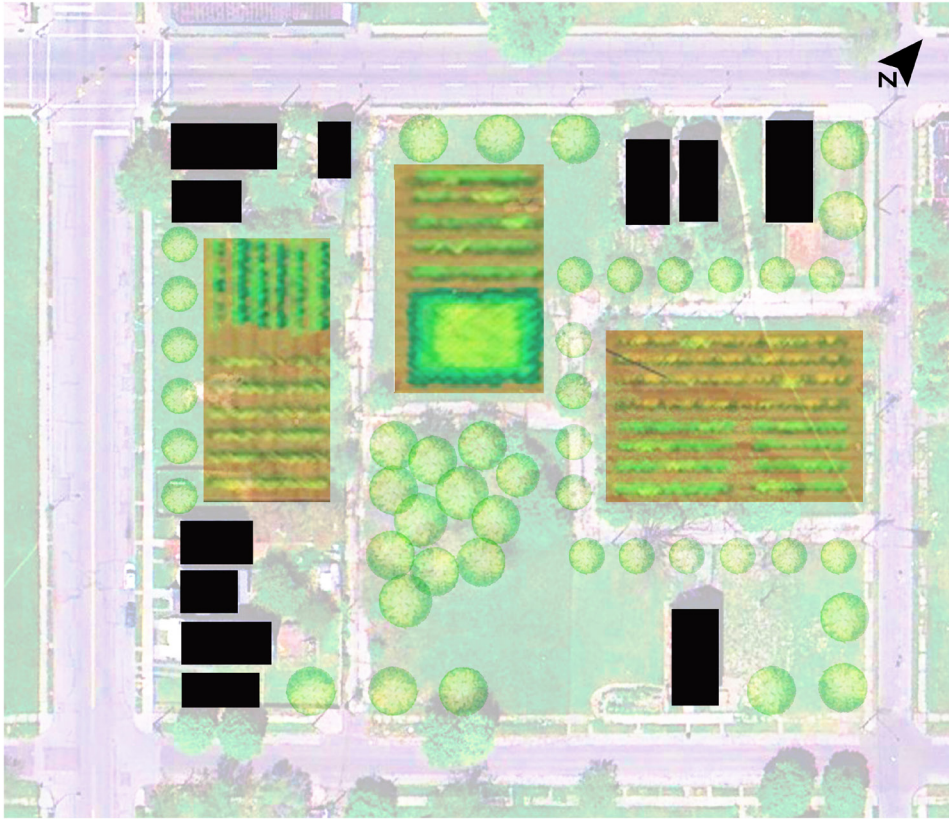
INFILL HOUSING

GARDEN AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS

CREATES COMMUNITY

PROFITABLE SALES ON FOOD

PROPOSED IMPERMEABLE COMMUNITY GREENSPACE

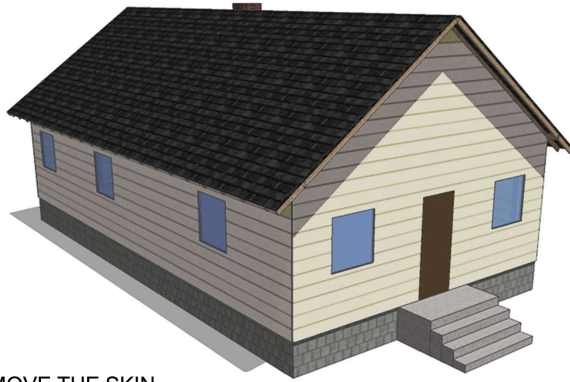


PROPOSED PERMEABLE COMMUNITY GREENSPACE

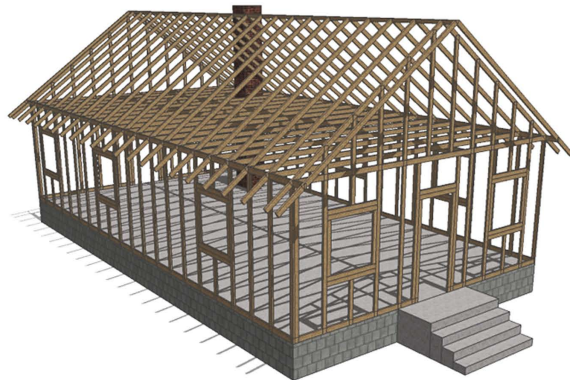
- HOUSING LEFT AS IS
- GARDEN FOR COMMUNITY AND GUESTS
- ALLOWS GREENSPACES TO CONNECT
- BRIDGES GAP OF SURROUNDING AREAS

Process

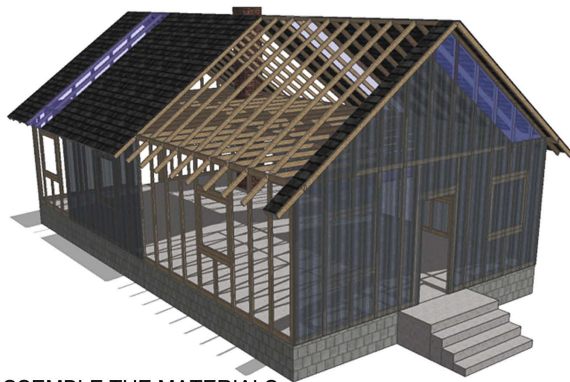
This study concept was used to understand what would be done to the selected houses along the greenway. They would go through a process of stabilization and reprogramming of space.



STEP 1: REMOVE THE SKIN



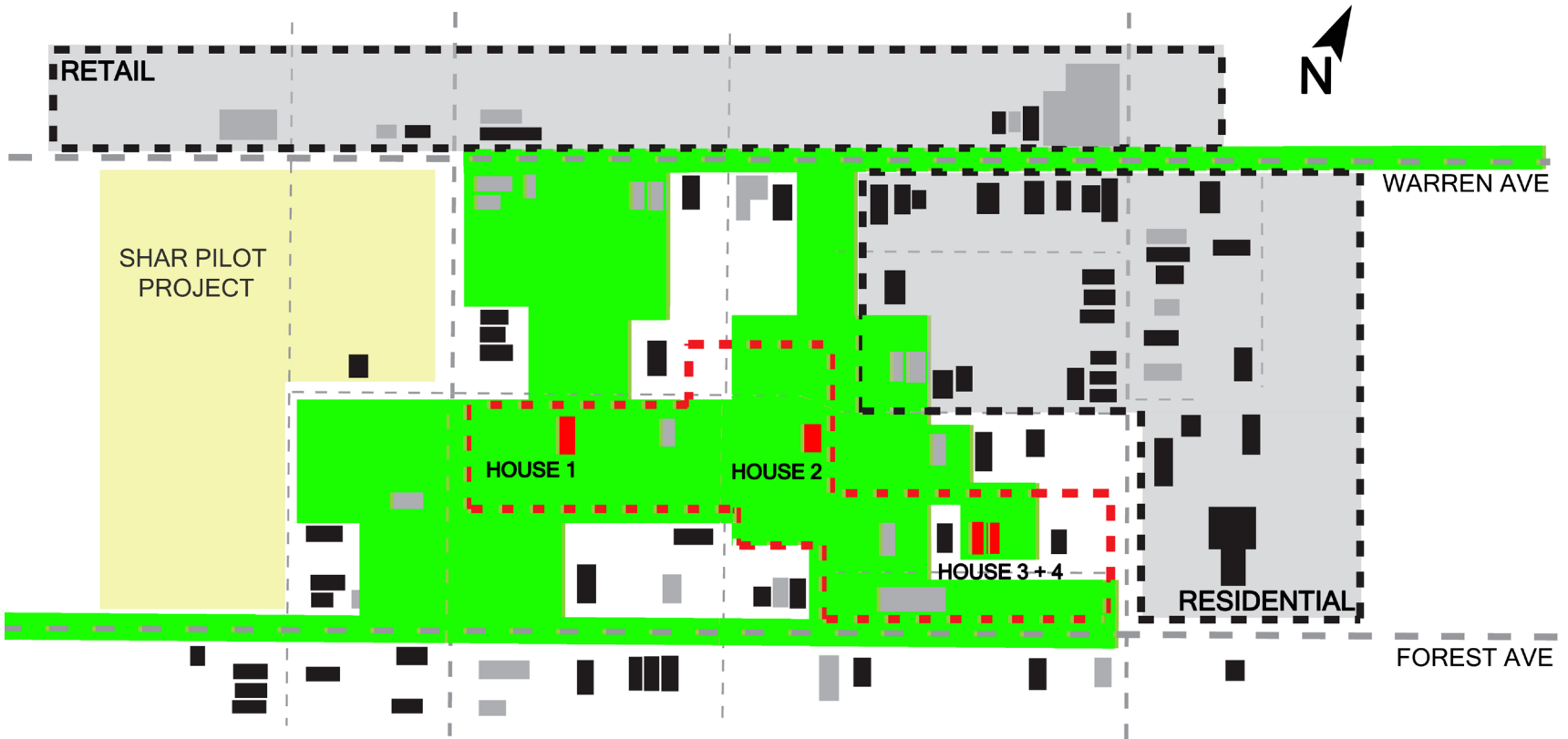
STEP 2: PRESERVE THE STRUCTURAL SYSTEM



STEP 3: REASSEMBLE THE MATERIALS



development 1 - zoning



PROGRAMATIC ELEMENTS OF THE SITE



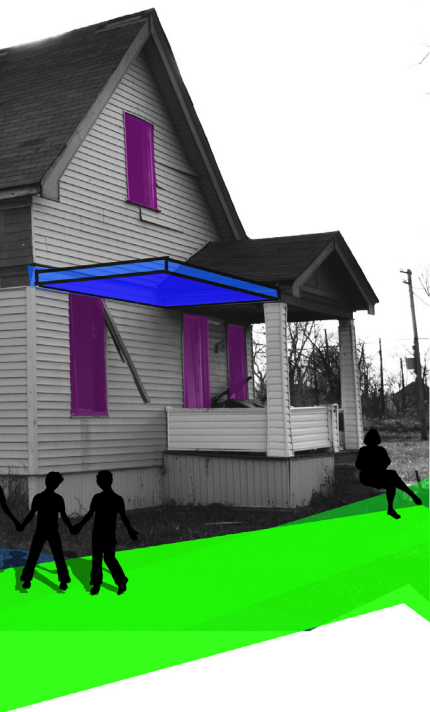
PROPOSED LOCATION OF FUTURE RETAIL



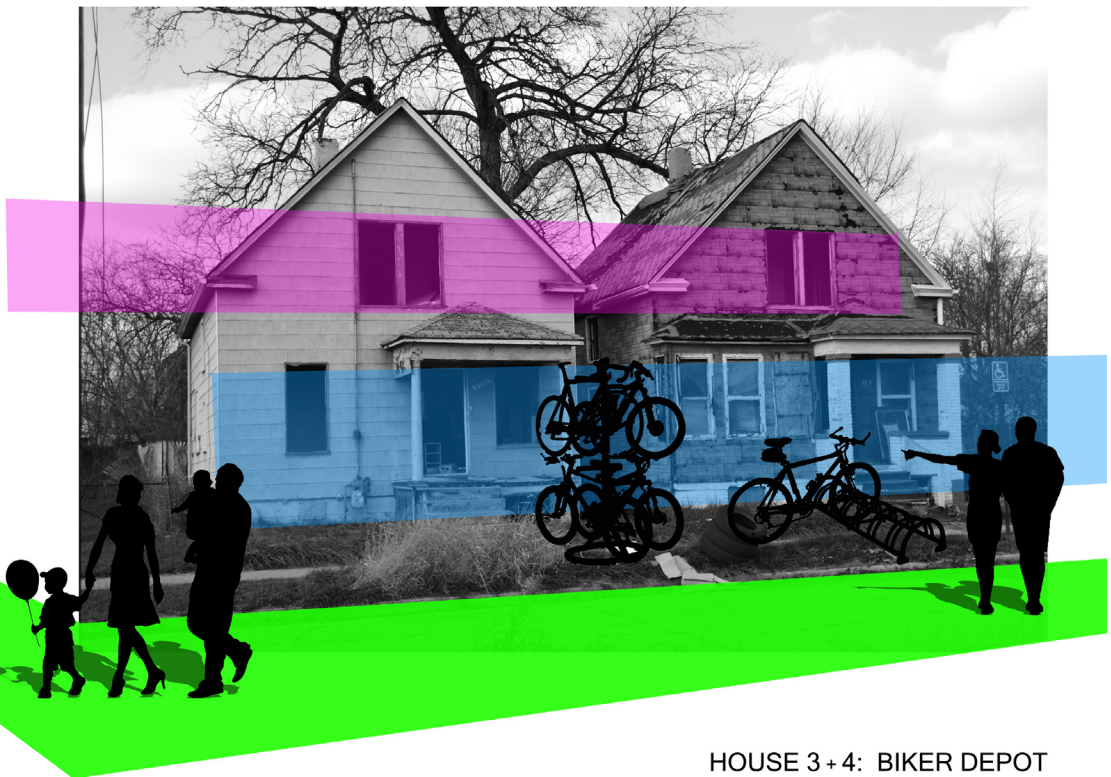
STABILIZE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS



HOUSE 1: TREE HOUSE



HOUSE 2: PLAY HOUSE



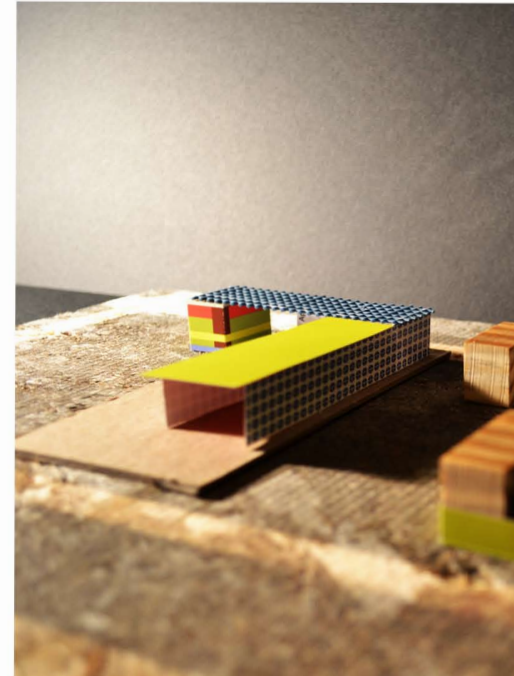
HOUSE 3+4: BIKER DEPOT

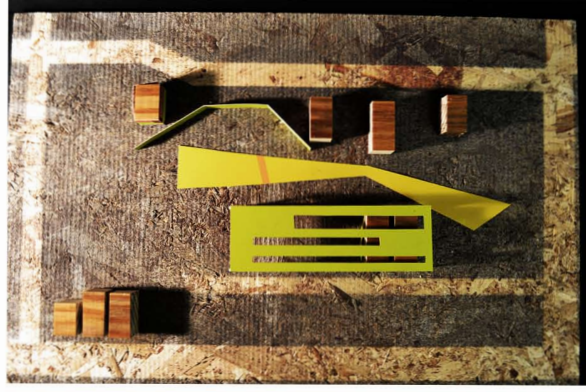
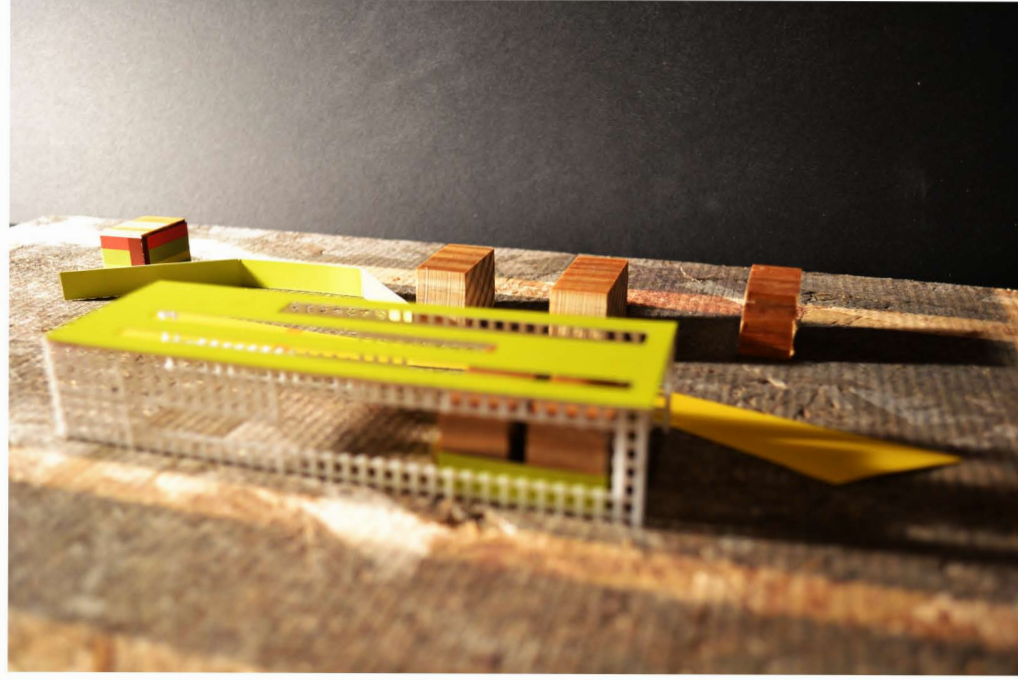
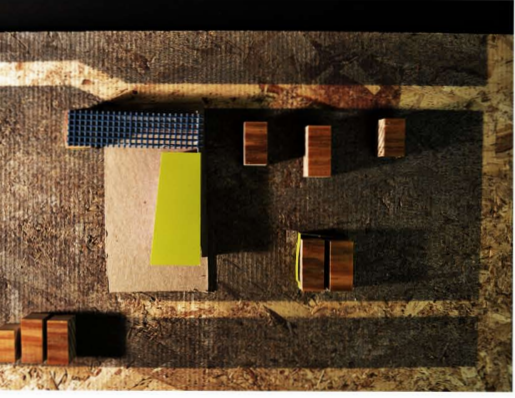
project development 2

1

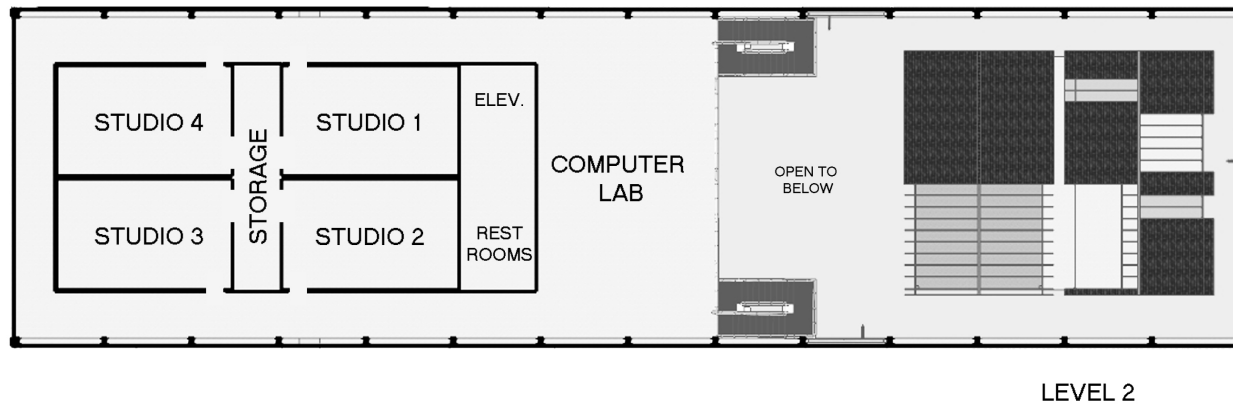
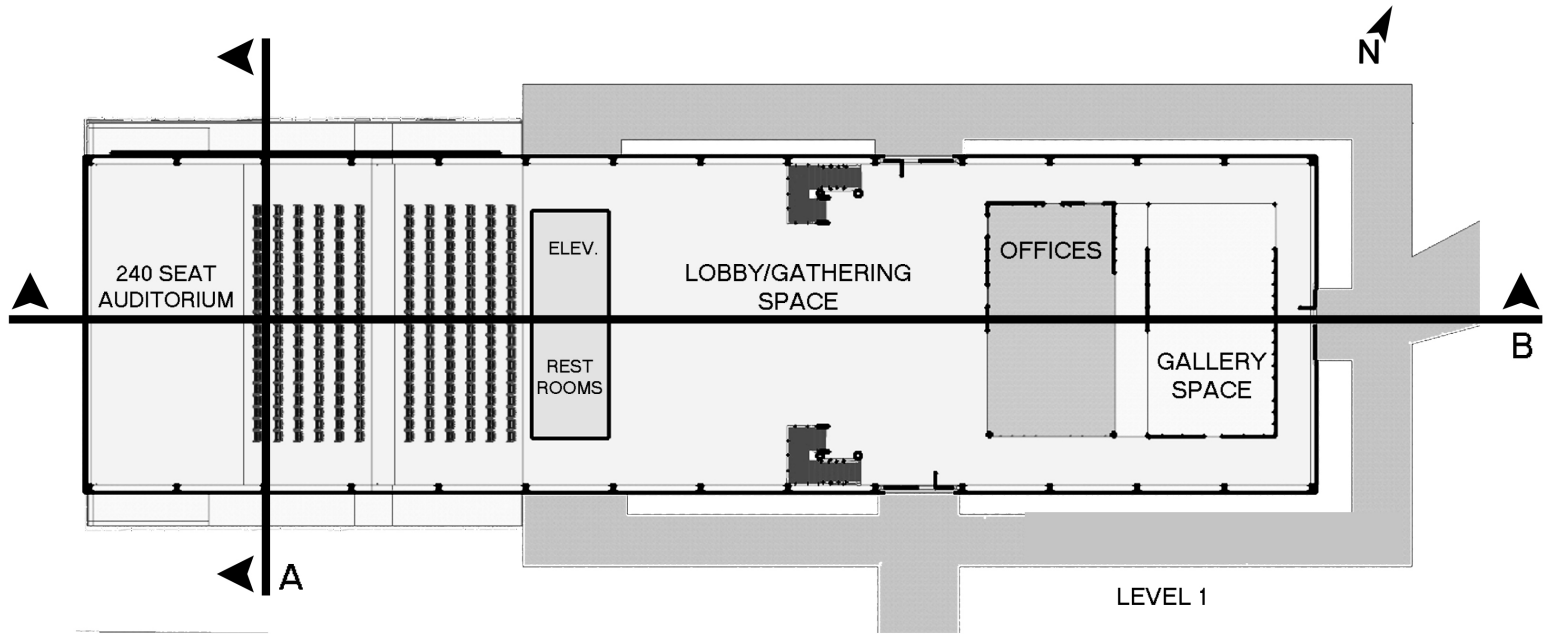


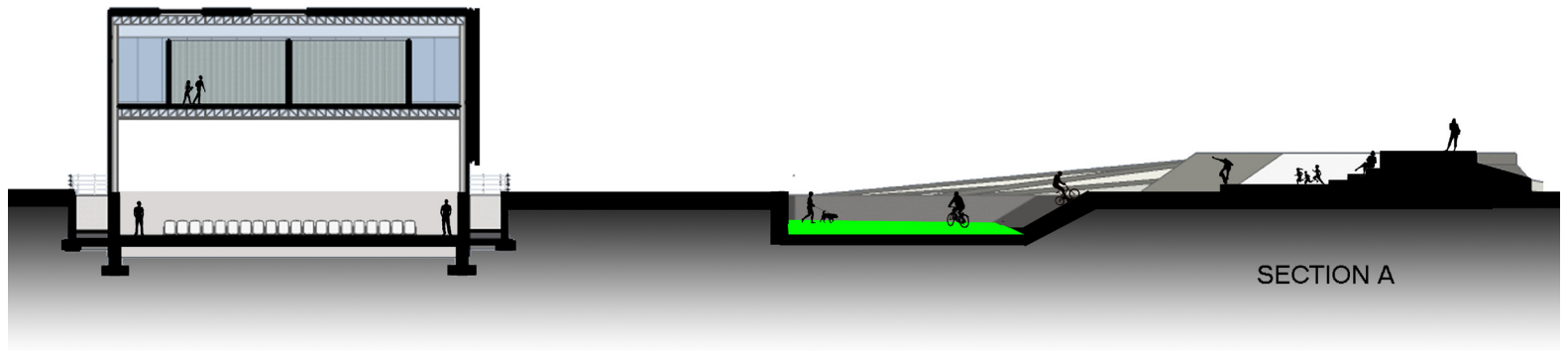
2



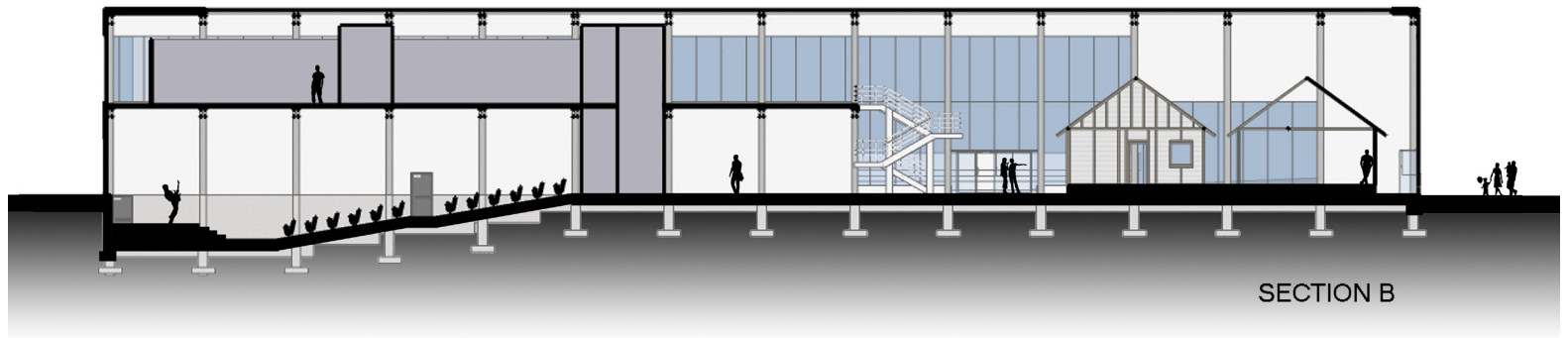


development 2 - plans and sections



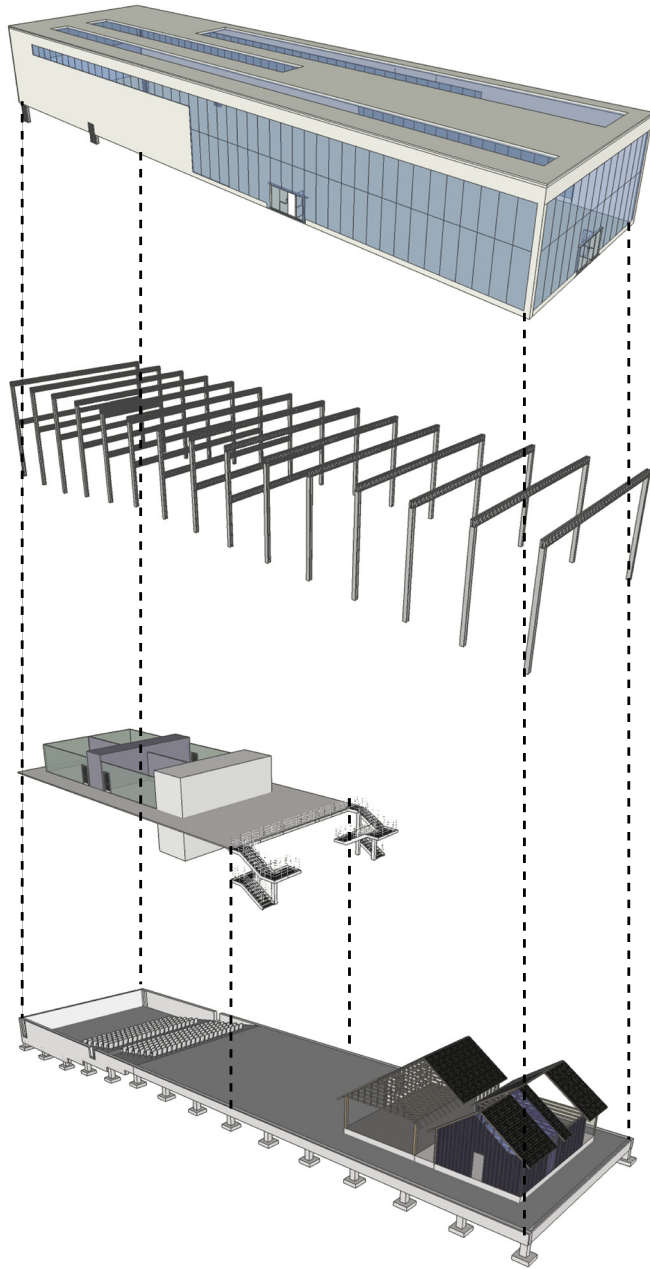


SECTION A



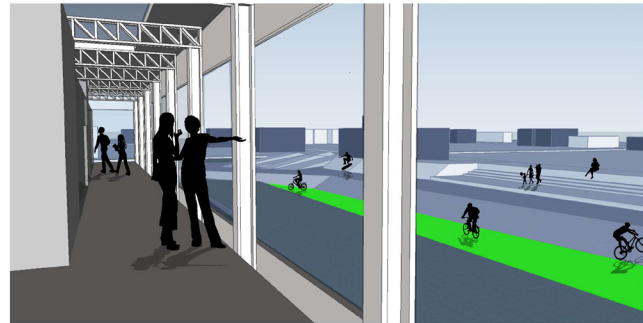
SECTION B

development 2 - detailed axonometric model

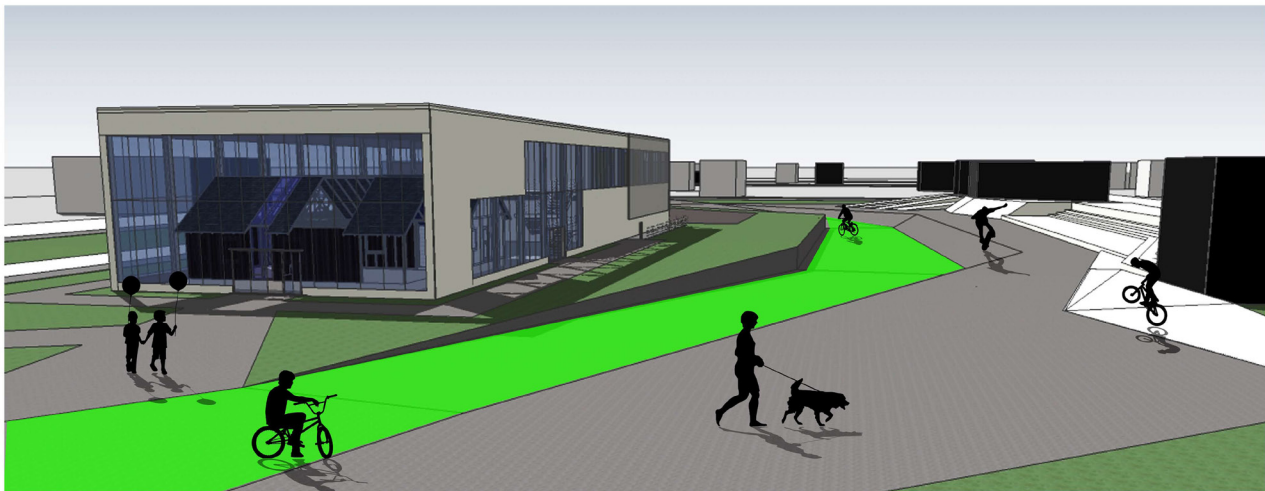




INTERIOR VIEW OF THE LOBBY AND OFFICES



VIEW OF HALLWAY LEADING TO THE SECOND FLOOR STUDIOS



OUTDOOR PROJECTION AREA WITH GREENWAY AND SKATEPARK





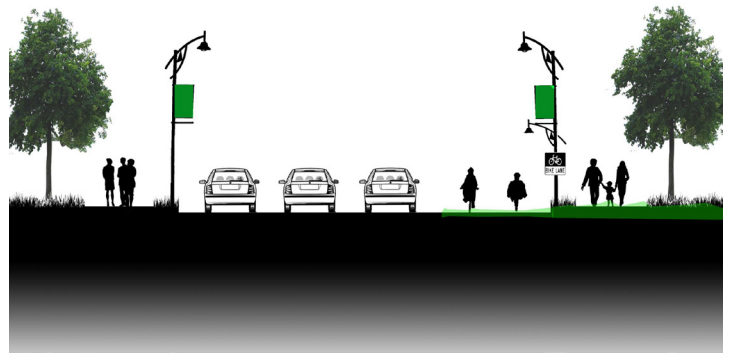
Design Solution for the Two Houses

In the final development of the building, the two houses were no longer encapsulated by the new building but instead become their own entities and functional usable spaces. They become independent, stable, and used. The two houses shown to the left is a precedent I used called the Imagination Station, located in Detroit, MI. This is a process similar to what could happen to vacant houses along the greenway.





transformation of existing landscapes



thesis

research

site

explorations

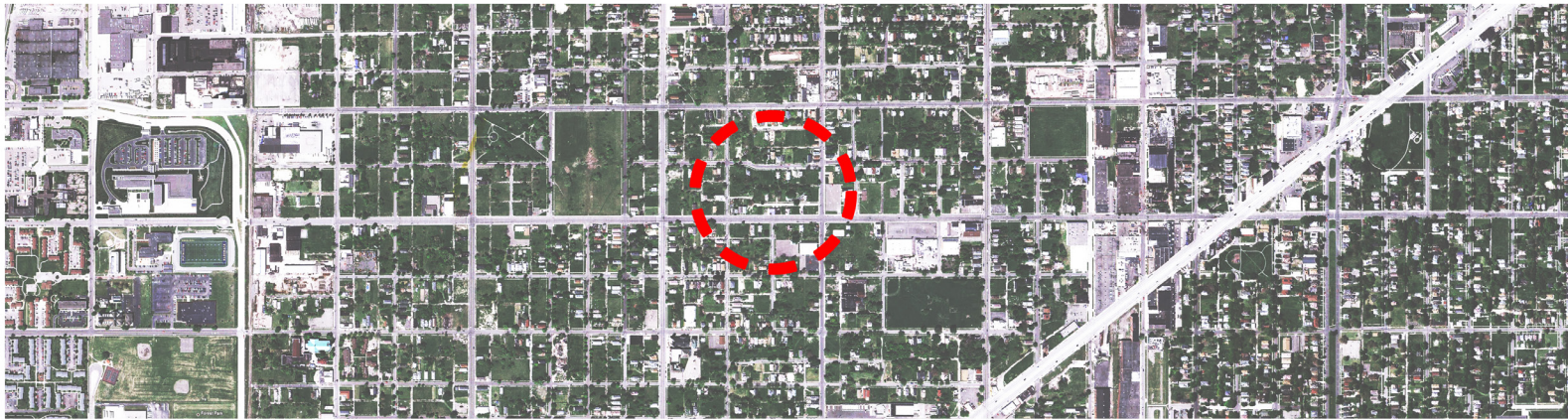
development

final design

final development - greenway



SITE MAP



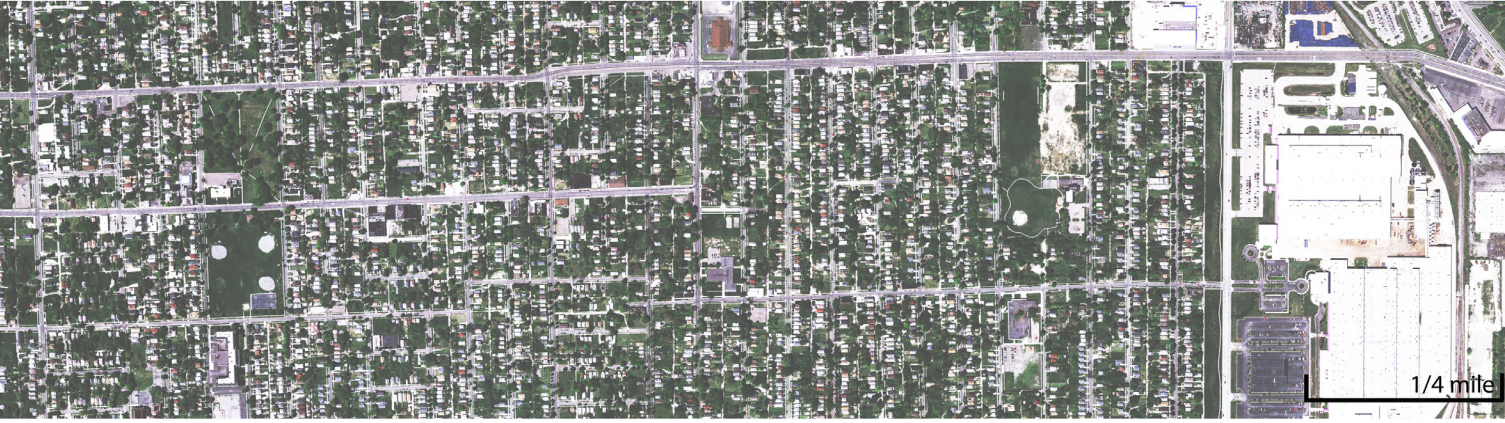
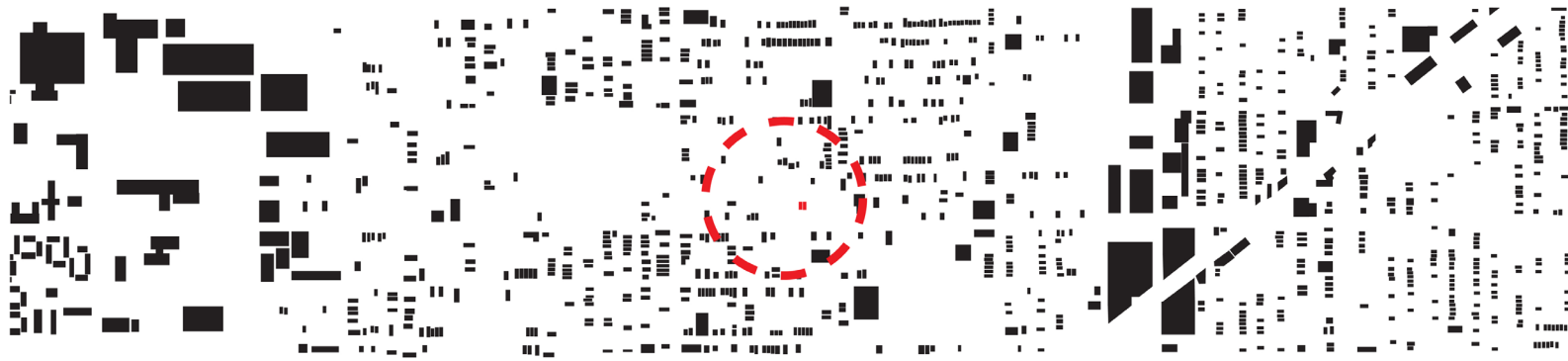
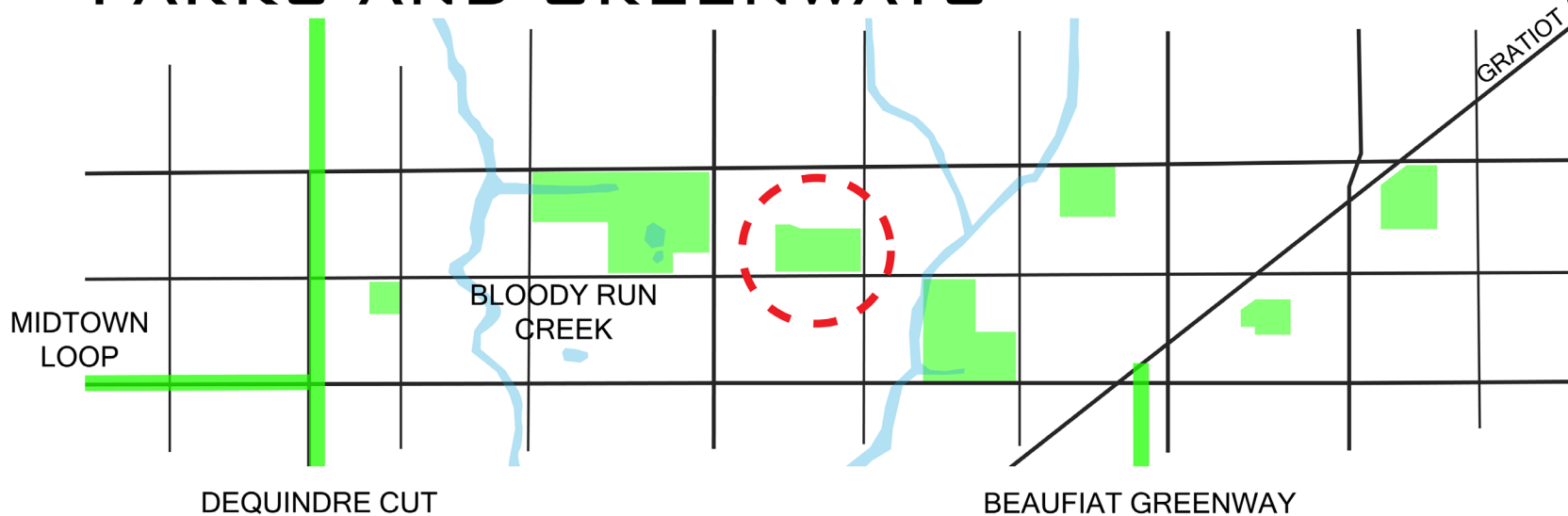


FIGURE GROUND MAP

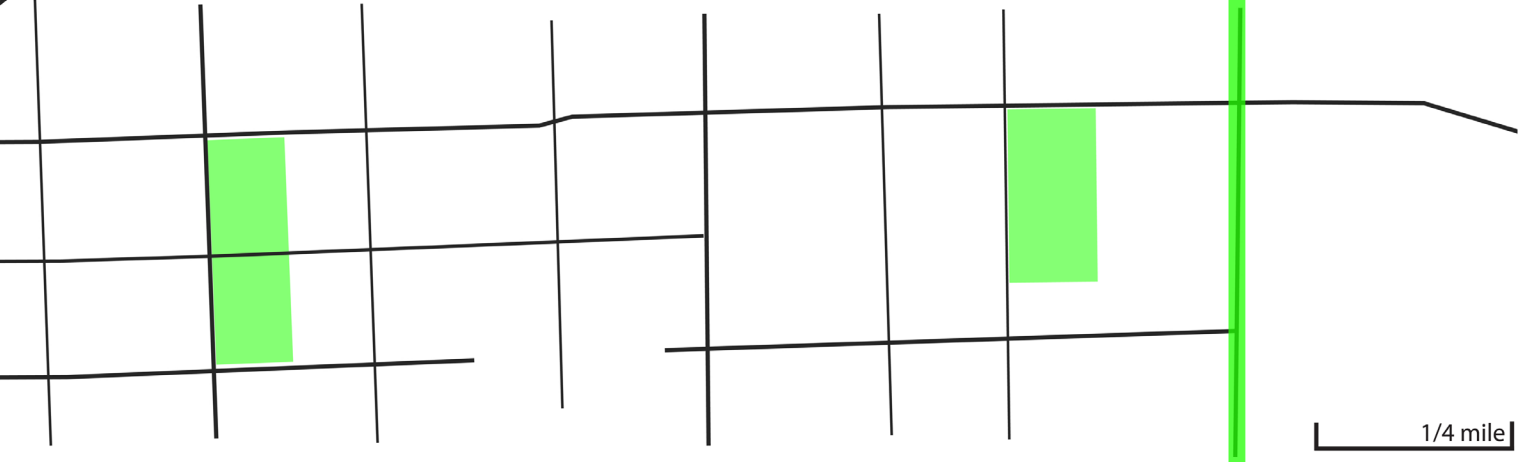


WHITE SPACES REPRESENT VOIDS IN THE LANDSCAPE

PARKS AND GREENWAYS

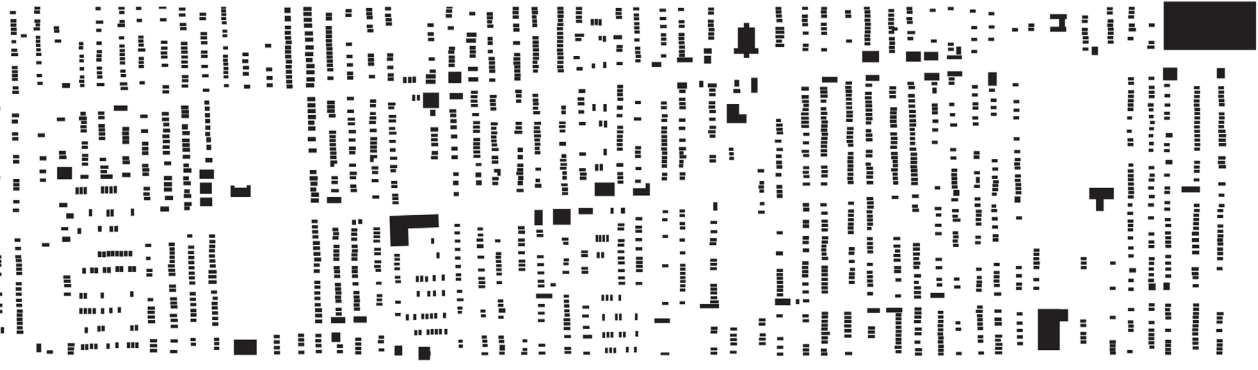


AVE



CONNOR CREEK

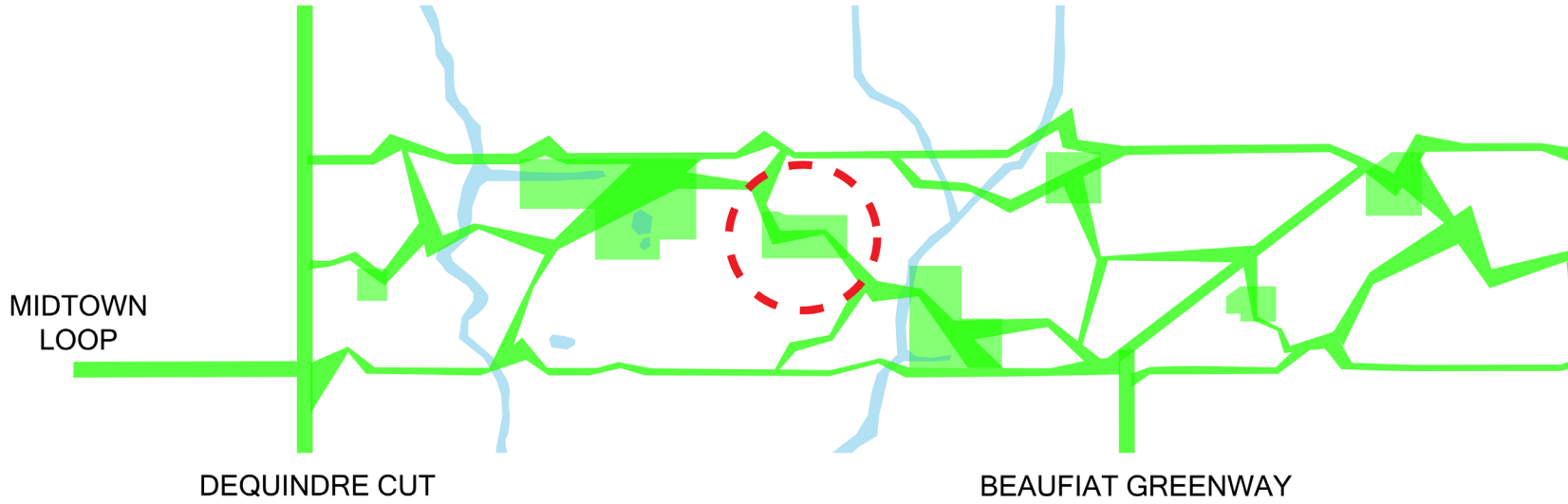
1/4 mile



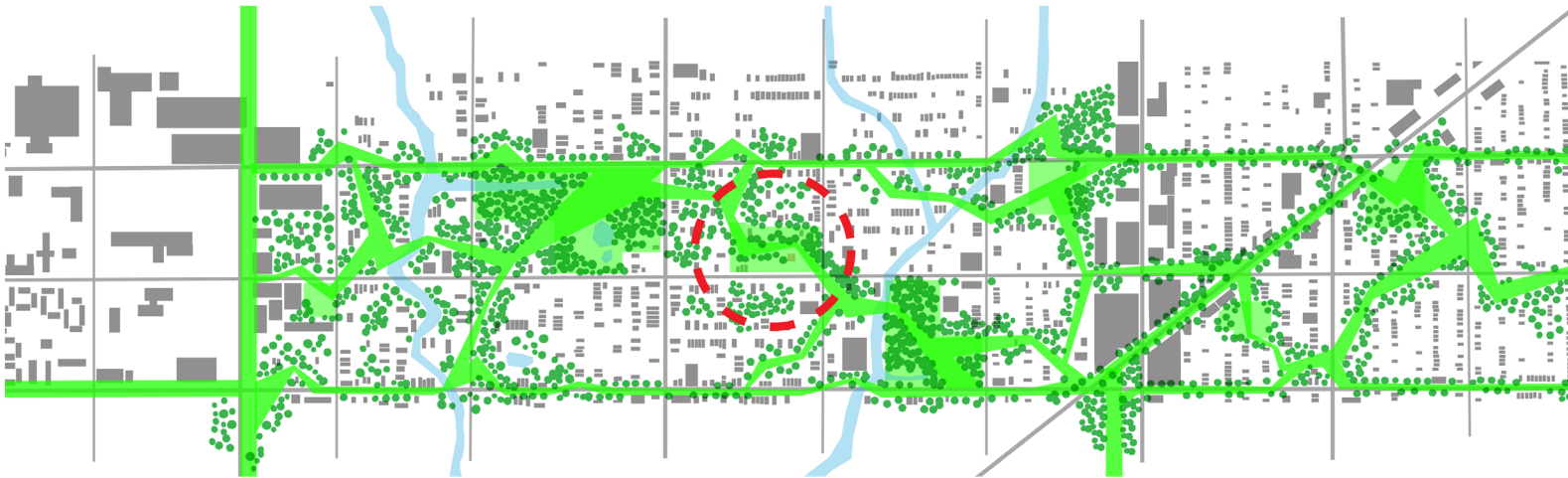
1/4 mile

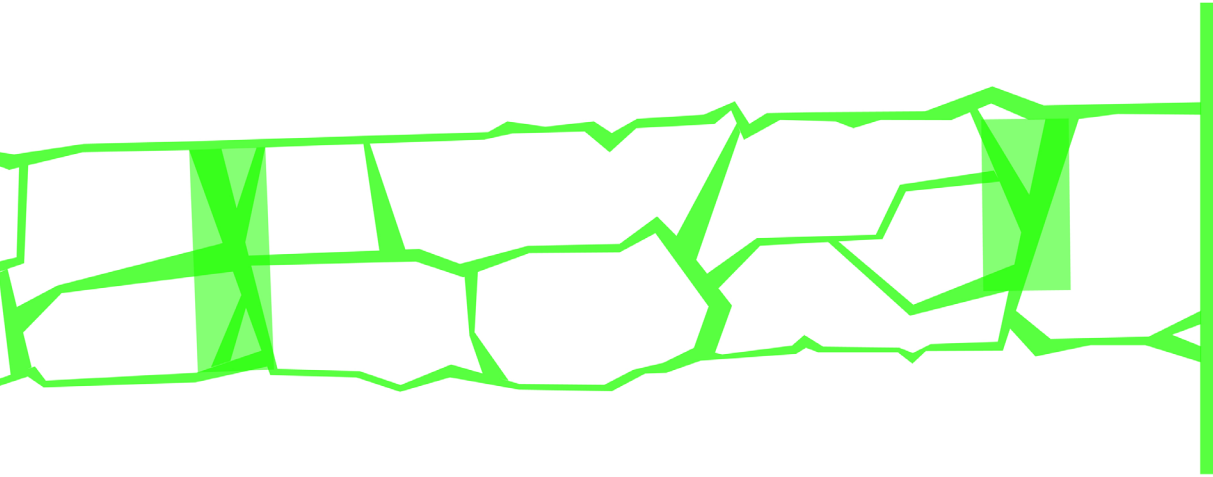
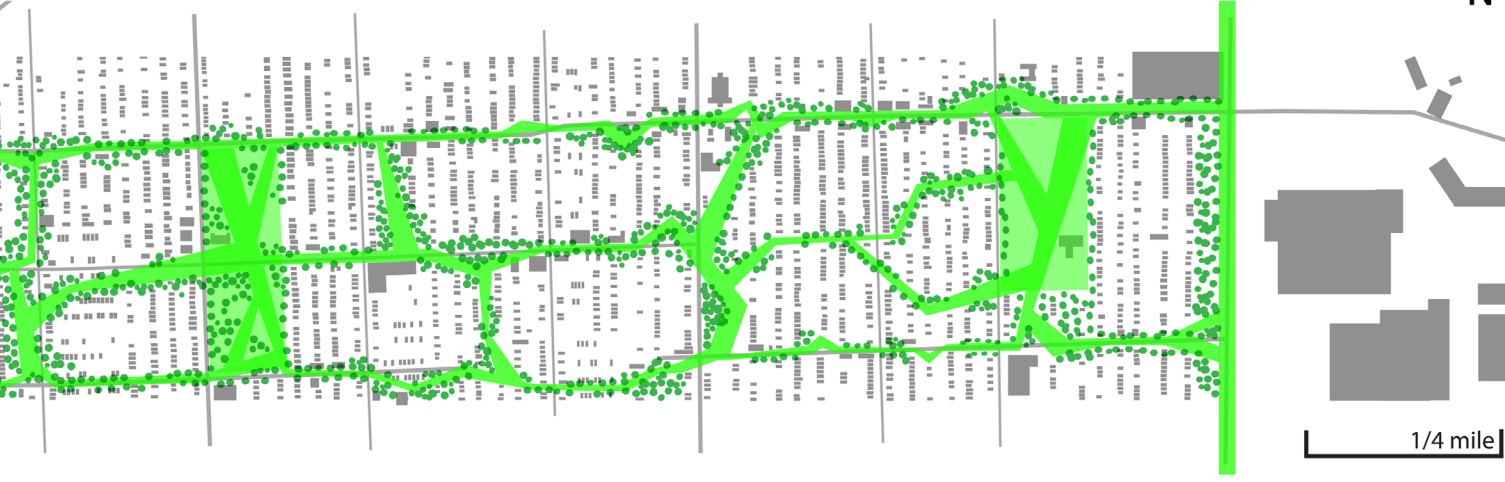


PROPOSED LINKAGE



RECLAMATION TRAIL MASTER PLAN

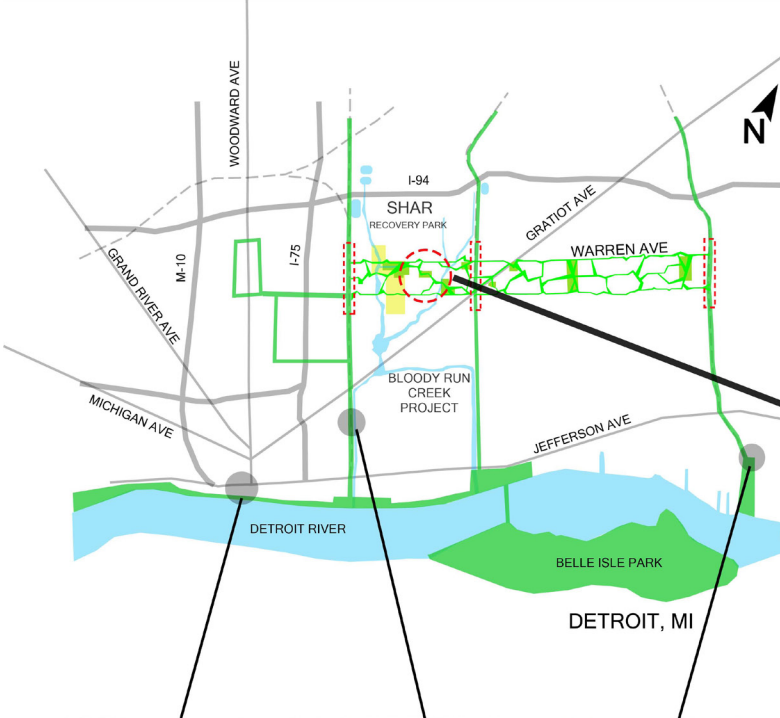




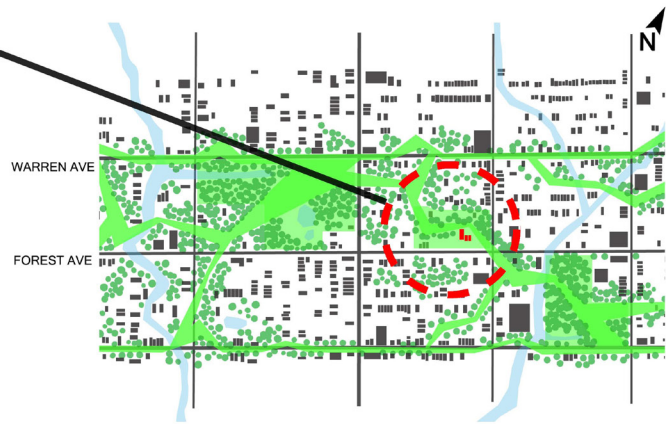
CONNOR CREEK

final development - art studios

SITE



SUPPORTING ASSETS IN THE AREA



DETAIL OF GREENWAY AND ARTS CENTER



RIVER WALK



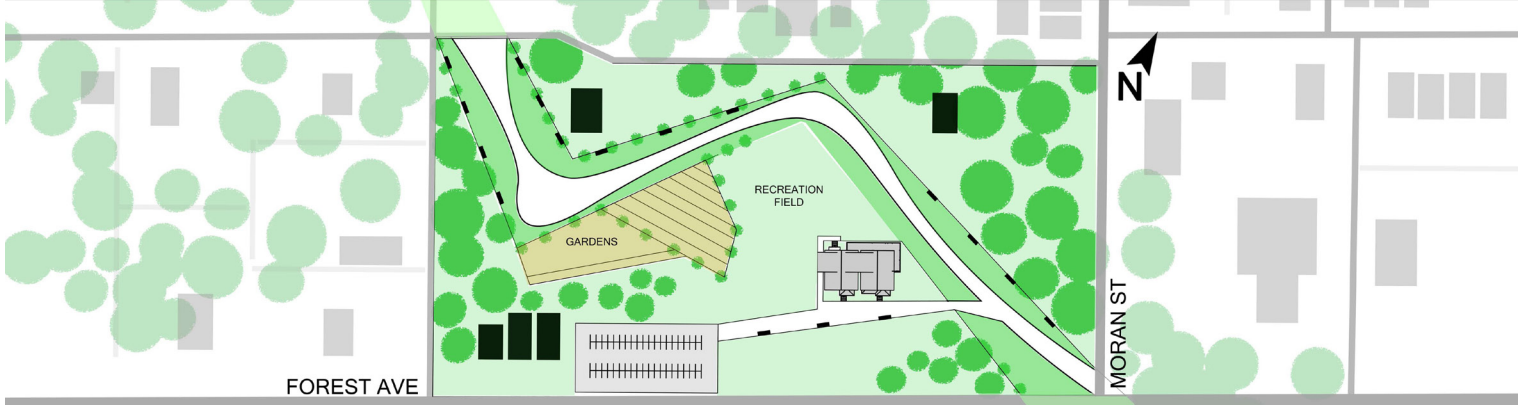
DEQUINDRE CUT



CONNER CREEK

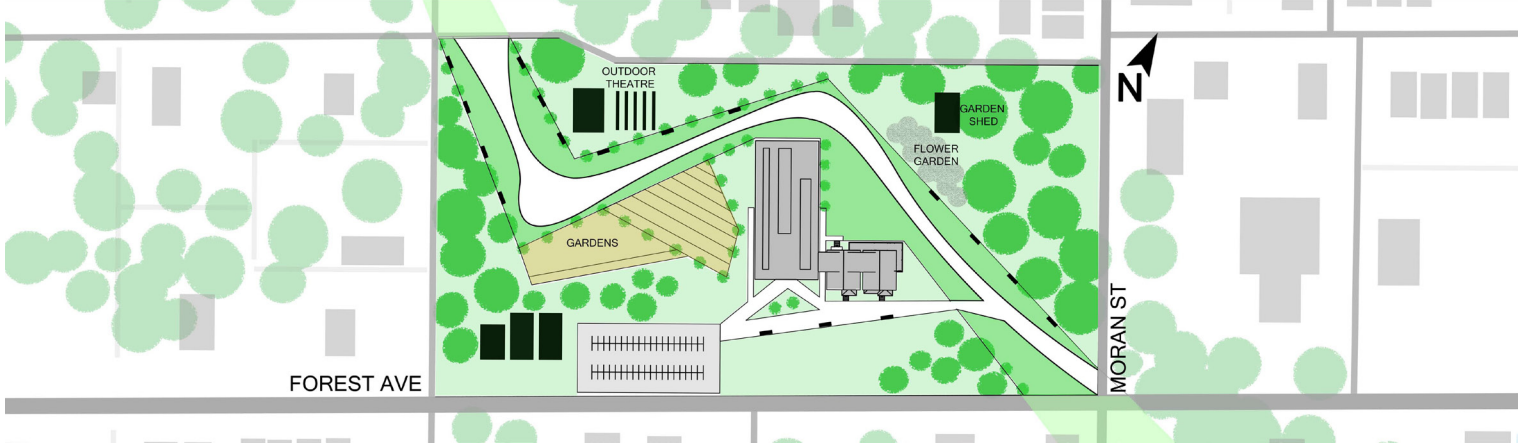
PHASE 1 - PARK PLAN

1/32" = 1'

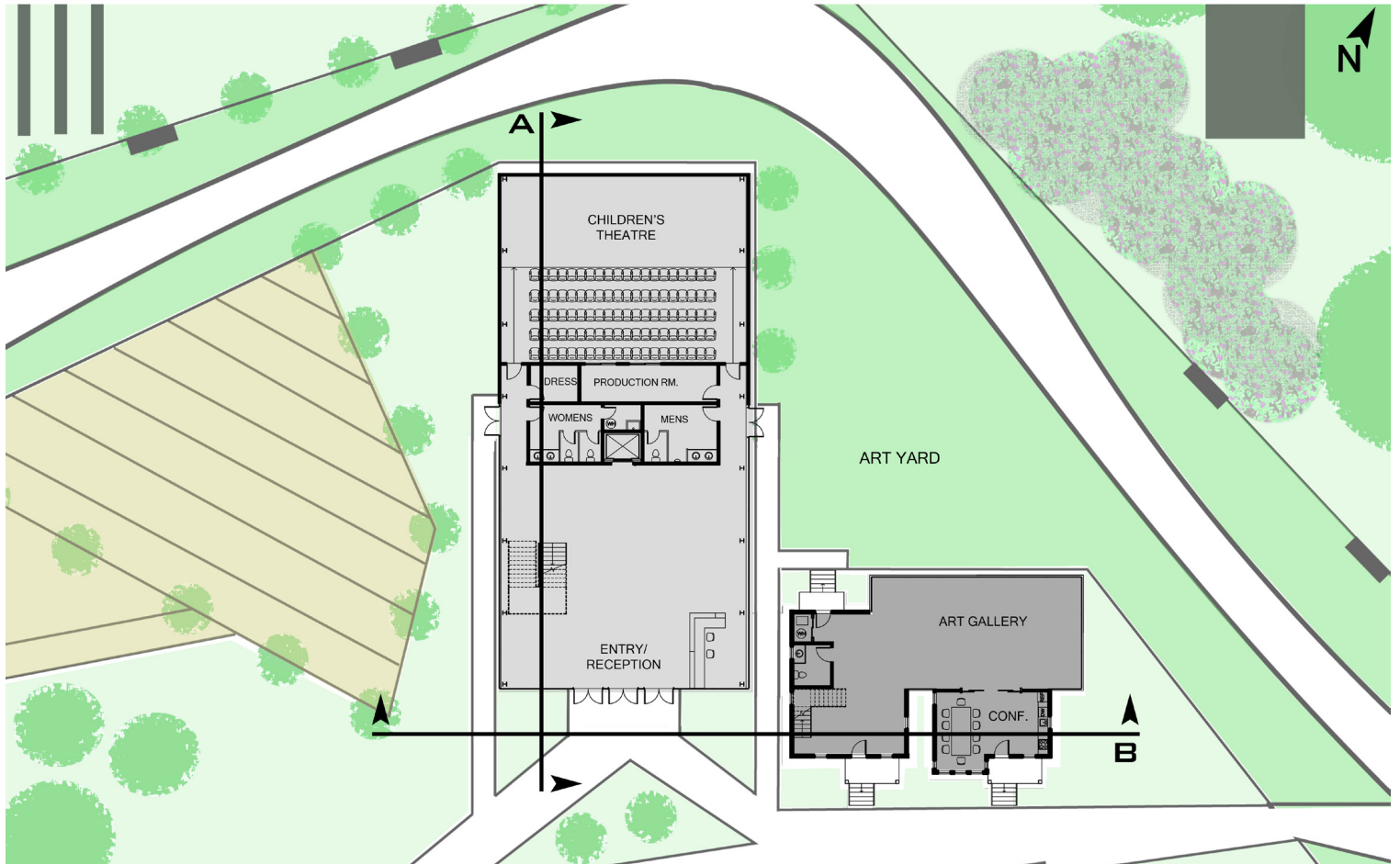


PHASE 2 - PARK PLAN

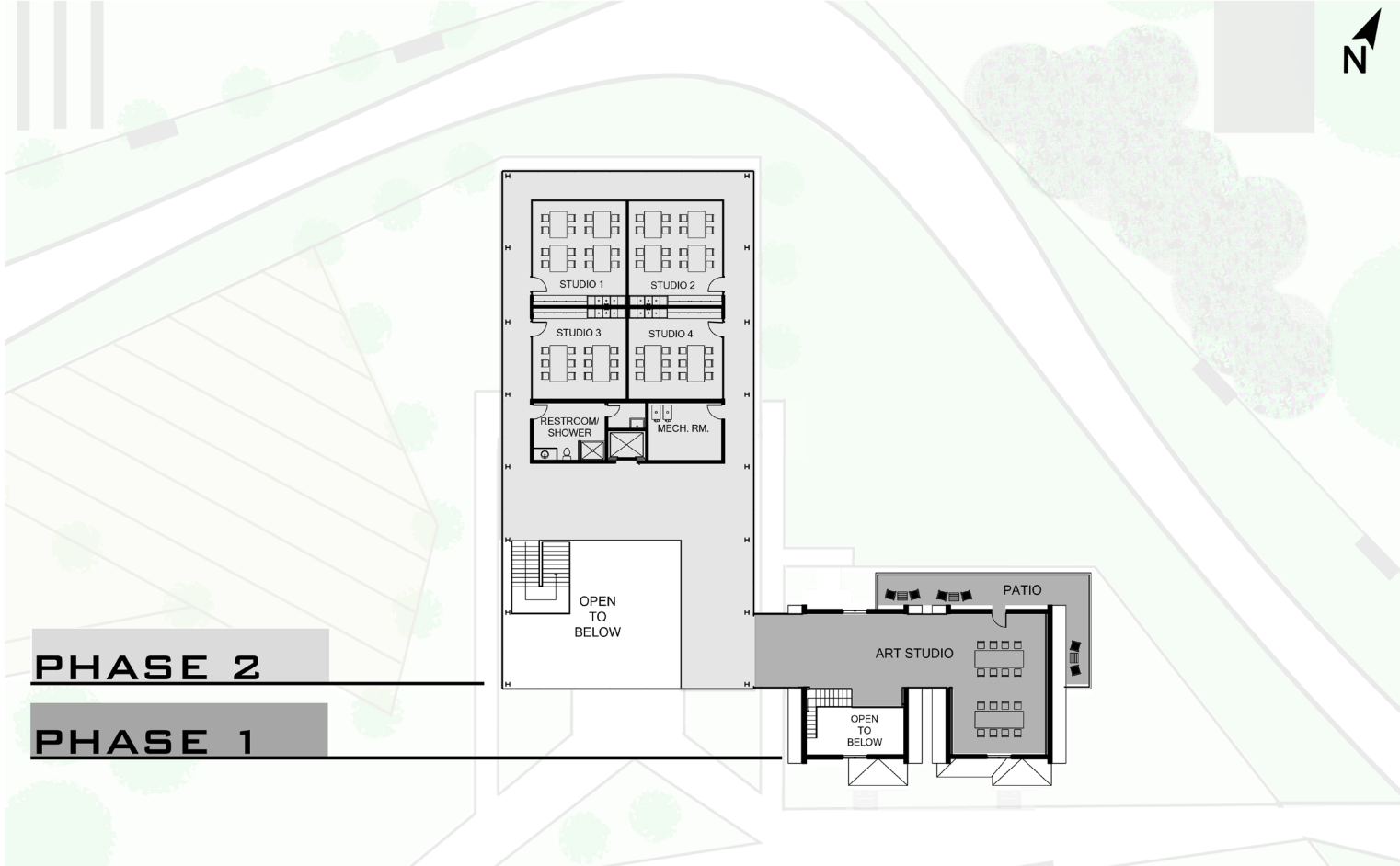
1/32" = 1'



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

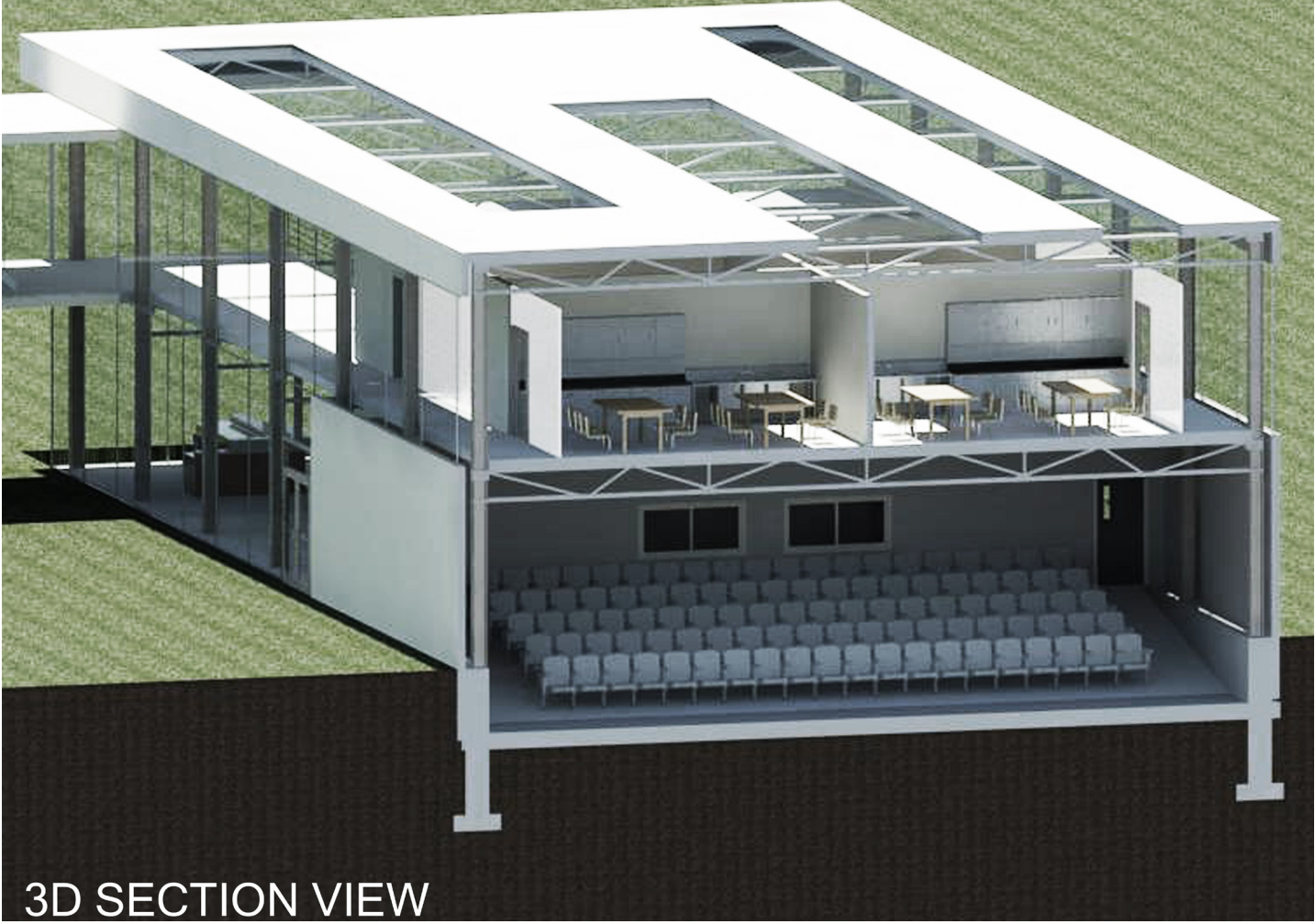


PHASE 2

PHASE 1

SECTIONS





3D SECTION VIEW

design - phase 1



design - phase 2



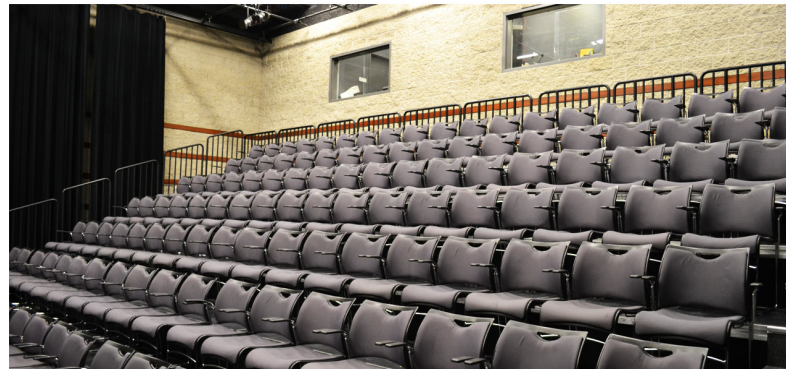


program phase 1:

art studio, gallery, and conference room

program phase 2:

four additional studios, and a children's amphitheatre



YMCA: DETROIT, MI





thesis paper bibliography

Corner, James. *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999. Print.

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“MTGA.” *Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Dec 2010. <<http://www.michigantrails.org/projects/detroit-trails/>>.

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Wachter, Susan, and Kevin Gillen. “Public Investment Strategies: How They Matter for Neighborhoods in Philadelphia.” *Wharton School: University of Pennsylvania*. (2006): Print.

Weisman, Alan. *The World Without Us*. New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin’s Press, 2007. Print.

photograph references

- 1 <http://listicles.com/uncategorized/6-creepy-abandoned-amusement-parks/> Author: Listicles
- 2 <http://picasaweb.google.com/runfromfire/HashimaPripyatRyugyong#> Author: Joseph Kuzma
- 3 <http://www.flickr.com/photos/veender/622124007/> Author: Veender
- 4 <http://www.flickr.com/photos/danielzolli/2443086831/> Author: Daniel Zolli
- 5 <http://www.flickr.com/photos/danielzolli/2440928047/> Author: Daniel Zolli
- 6 http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.6805/pub_detail.asp Author: Daniel Pipes
- 7 http://www.readymade.com/blog/home-and-garden/2010/09/23/a_house_can_tell_you_what_to_do1 Author: Sarah F. Cox
- 8 <http://www.flickr.com/photos/14110186@N08/2434673219/in/photostream/lightbox/> Adventures Detroit Trip, Author: Cm2175
- 9 <http://www.fastcompany.com/1653220/this-old-house-detroit-edition-abandoned-home-a-lab-for-design-experiment> Author: Suzanne LaBarre
- 10 http://arch.udmercy.edu/dc/De_Sign-Firebreak-Breath.html Author: DCDC
- 11 http://arch.udmercy.edu/dc/De_Sign-Firebreak-Hay.html Author: DCDC
- 12 <http://houseandgardenningaddicts.wordpress.com/2010/07/22/high-line-park-new-yorks-floating-green-railway-park/> House and Garden Addicts, Author: Swamp Thing
- 13 <http://www.flickr.com/photos/rexroof/3689523257/> Author: Rex Roof
- 14 <http://www.azchampion.com/news0056.asp> Champion Modular Homes Built in One Day on Delmar Street, North End Village, Detroit, Author: Unknown
- 15 http://www.hhour.org/2010_11_01_archive.html The Heidelberg Project, Author: Unknown
- 16 <http://www.psfk.com/2009/08/return-to-nature-detroits-feral-houses.html> Sweet Juniper, Author: Dan Gould
- 17 <http://www.neogaf.com/forum/showthread.php?p=19686699> Author: Dan Deschain
- 18 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Conner-creek.JPG> Wikipedia
- 19 <http://www.losingitwithstyle.com/Blog/tag/walking/> Author: Amanda Hawkins
- 20 <http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://cmsimg.detnews.com/apps/pbcsi.dll/bilde%3FSite%3DC3%26Date%3D20090630%26Category%3DMETRO%26ArtNo%3D906300361%26Ref%3DH3&imgrefurl=http://detnews.com/article/20090630/METRO/906300361/Kresge-Foundation-steps-up-gifts-to-Detroit-causes&usq=QP-itngqNk49Ewm5qUs0dxgW5xw=&h=333&w=500&sz=37&hl=en&start=0&zoom=1&tbnid=ah5OldPxxXZnDM:&tbnh=123&tbnw=164&ei=iGm6TfHG8bAtgfQxe3kBO&prev=/search%3Fq%3Ddequindre%2Bcut%2Bdetroit%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26safe%3Doff%26sa%3DN%26biw%3D1408%26bih%3D681%26tbnid%3D11%2C0&um=1&itbs=1&iact=rc&dur=367&page=1&ndsp=28&ved=1t:429,r:26,s:0&tx=91&ty=56&biw=1408&bih=681> Author: Unknown
- 21 http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://cdn.didditmedia.com/thumbs/bb/89/bb899188e6fa8b9e63fd84b73ffcee18-420-280.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.diddit.com/ghost-town-clpxwd/pripyat-chernobyl-ukraine/&usq=F9MKgmOtiml-QYlvR4KPv6J1_hM=&h=280&w=420&sz=38&hl=en&start=488&zoom=1&tbnid=-JrAaJFgqcYBVM:&tbnh=160&tbnw=229&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dpryiat%2Bukraine%2Babandoned%2Bhousing%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26safe%3Doff%26biw%3D1408%26bih%3D681%26tbnid%3D11%2C16184&um=1&itbs=1&iact=hc&vpx=879&vpy=362&dur=1586&hovh=183&hovw=275&tx=241&ty=107&ei=rDQpTaSALZqInAeVvsTIAQ&oei=GjQpTarmIagnweF6LHuDQ&esq=64&page=30&ndsp=16&ved=1t:429,r:3,s:488&biw=1408&bih=681 Author: Unknown



I'd like to thank my family and friends, who have always supported me no matter what challenges I faced and who have pushed me to be myself. It is important to discover the beauty in all things and to have faith in whatever rises up from the ashes.





To my beloved Detroit, may this adventure we are about to begin take us far into a world of new opportunity.

